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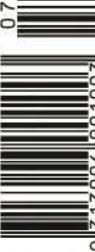


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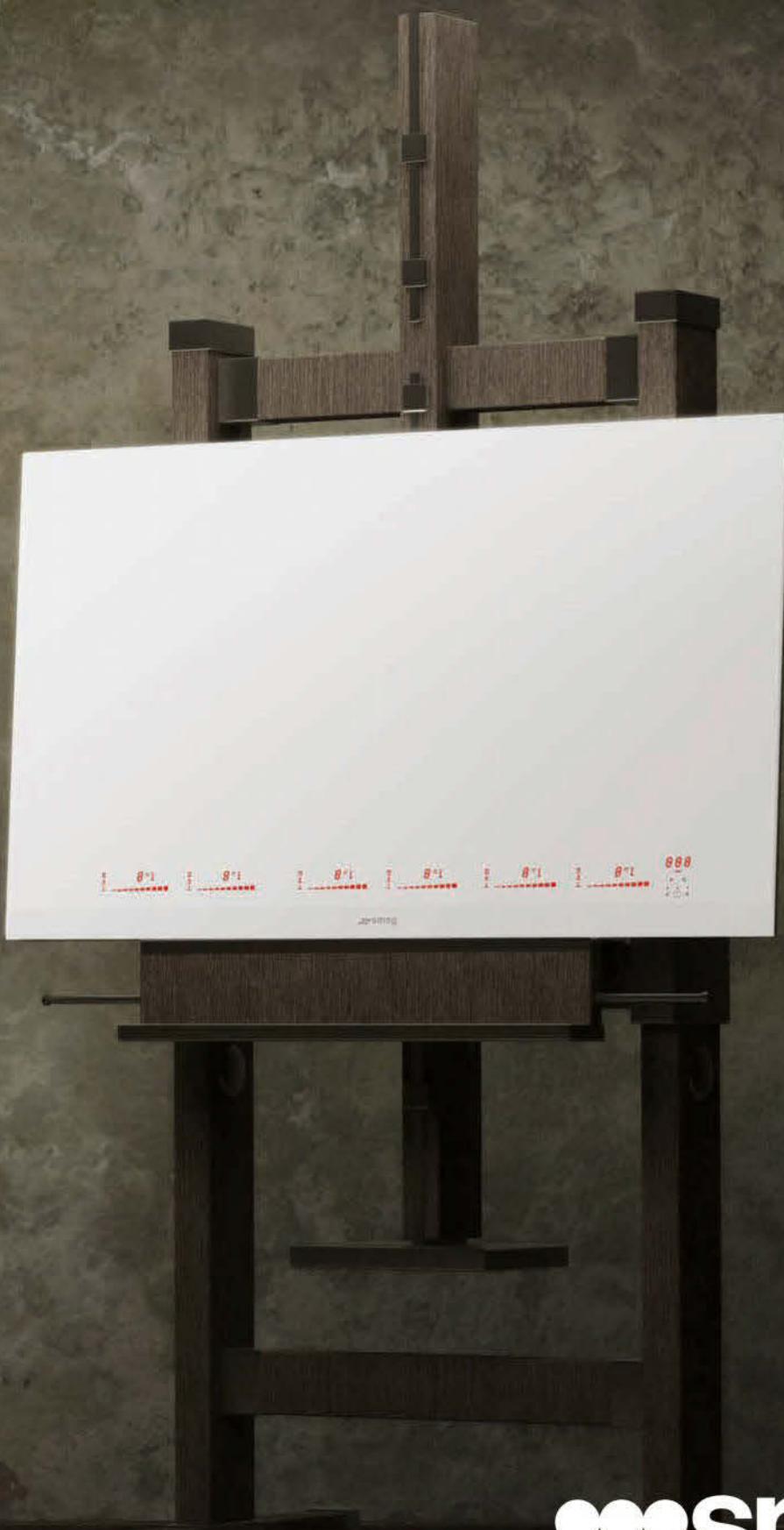
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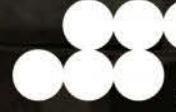
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# July

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# menus

*Entertaining's a breeze with these wintry ready-made menus from this issue.*

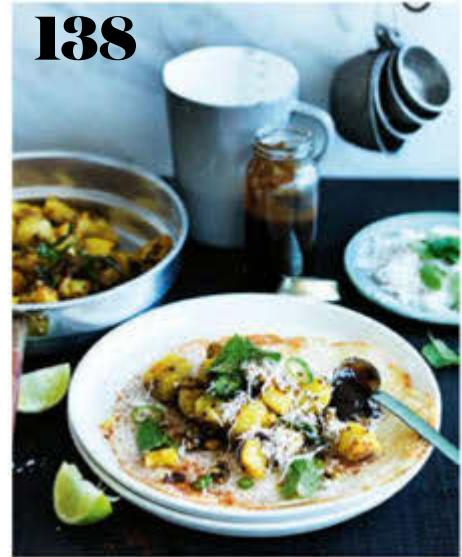
DRINK SUGGESTIONS MAX ALLEN



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## SUNDAY LUNCH

Orecchiette with cavolo nero and porcini (RECIPE P40)

Chicken with oregano dressing

(PICTURED; RECIPE P36)

Bread and butter pudding with banana and butterscotch sauce (RECIPE P142)



It's a casual Sunday lunch, so offer a small selection of wines, which would all be lovely with both the pasta and the chook, and let people help themselves: a full-flavoured *fiano*, a pale *dry rosé* and a medium-bodied savoury *sangiovese*, perhaps. And with the pud, a luscious fortified *Rutherglen muscadelle* (topaque).

## BASTILLE DAY CELEBRATIONS

Cream of fennel and potato soup

(PICTURED; RECIPE P43)

Pork hock croque-monsieur

(RECIPE P37)

Lemon tart

(RECIPE P53)



Classic French bistro fare like this needs classic French (or French-inspired) drinks to match. Start with a yeasty, creamy-textured *blanc de blancs Champagne* with the soup, offer rustic, rich Normandy *cider* or *pinot gris* from Alsace with the croque-monsieur and finish with a glass or two of *Sauternes*.

## SPICY WINTER DINNER

Dosai with spiced potatoes and tamarind chutney

(PICTURED; RECIPE P138)

Curry chicken noodle soup

(RECIPE P124)

Baked matcha custard with ginger-poached pears

(RECIPE P142)



With this dinner, why not try *beer*, *beer* and more *beer*. The nutty, malty flavours of a good craft pale ale would be lovely with the spicy, sweet and sour entrée; the strong, yeasty flavours of a *saison ale* would be perfect for the curry noodle soup; you could even have beer – a fruity *lambic-style ale* – with dessert.

A photograph of a woman with long brown hair, wearing a dark top, looking up at a variety of traditional Middle Eastern lanterns hanging from a ceiling in a market. The lanterns are made of glass and metal, with intricate patterns and some featuring stained-glass designs. The scene is lit by the warm glow of the lanterns.

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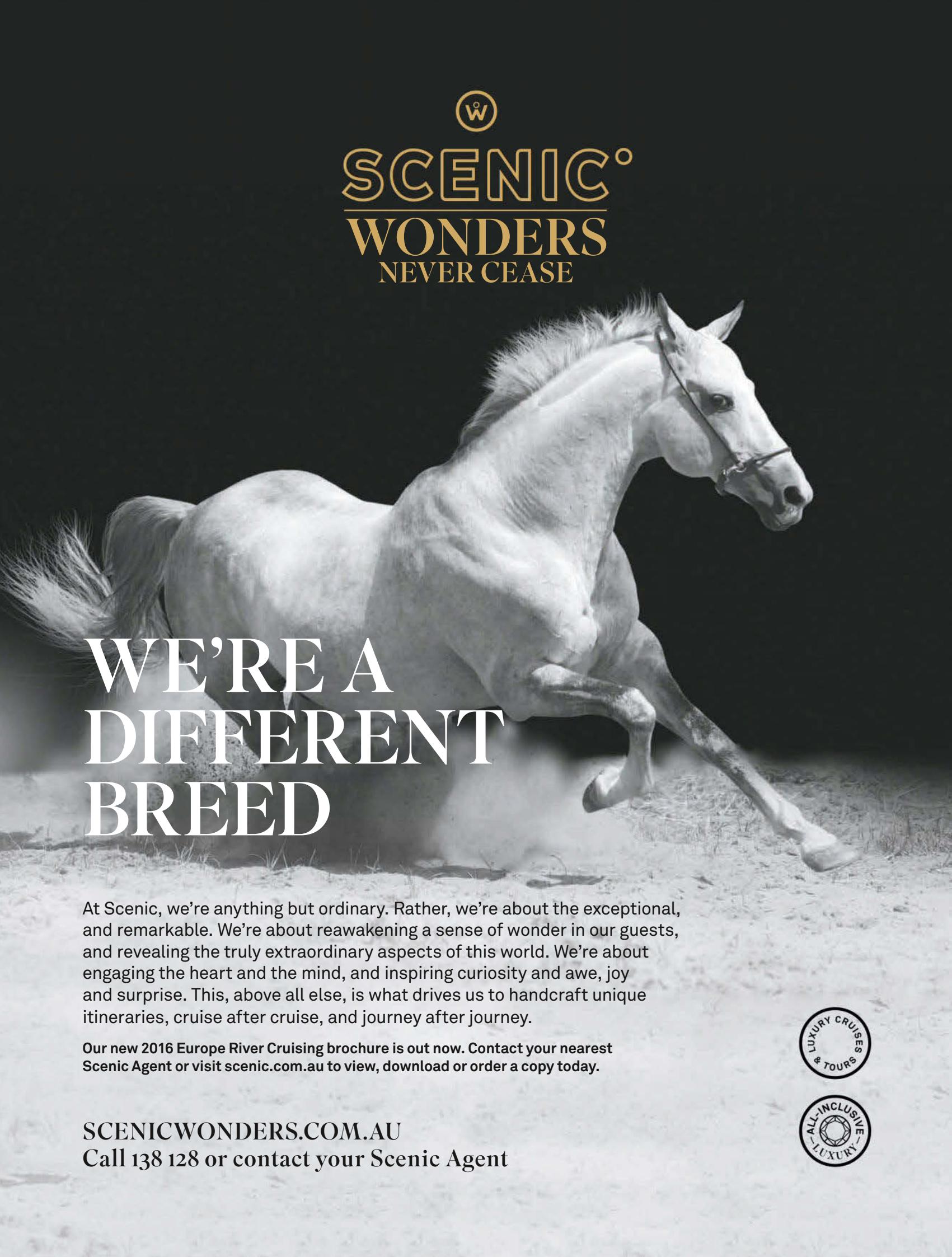
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## OUR FAVOURITE PLATES OF THE MONTH

### OYSTER MUSHROOMS

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### RICE VENERE, CRAB, NETTLES

Making a guest appearance at Qualia on Hamilton Island recently, chef Andrew McConnell says pulling mud crabs from the waters of the Whitsundays and using them to top this elegant risotto was one of the most exciting cooking adventures of his career. For the diners of Pebble Beach restaurant, it was pretty thrilling, too. *Qualia*, 20 Whitsunday Blvd, Hamilton Island, Qld, 1300 780 959 ANTHEA LOUCAS

### BEEF PREGO

Nuno Mendes is a chef known for his creativity, but at his latest London venture that energy is yoked to the traditions of Portugal, resulting in brilliant ideas like the prego, the classic Portuguese steak-sandwich bar snack, quietly enhanced here with prawn paste and wild garlic, more or less made for a glass of draft Super Bock. *Taberna do Mercado*, Old Spitalfields Market, 107b Commercial St, London PAT NORRSE

If you like to cook, **planning a new kitchen is incredibly exciting**. But it can be incredibly stressful and mind-numbingly confusing, too.

Do you go with new-age induction or stick with an old-school flame for your stovetop? Is a steam oven really all it's cracked up to be or will a simple pyrolytic convection number do just fine? Hexagonal or subway tiles for the splashback? Yes, one of the potential pitfalls is becoming paralysed by choice and this is where I hope our Kitchen Special will come to your aid.

We have pulled together the country's top design experts to offer inspiration and advice on what your next kitchen might look like. *Belle* magazine's style director at large Steve Cordony reports on the hottest design trends (see page 95), presenting five different but equally chic looks. Georgia Madden updates us on the latest and greatest appliances (page 104), three passionate cooks share their (very beautiful) kitchens (page 100) and we quiz our favourite architects on how to build a space that's beautiful in both form and function (page 88).

I sat on a panel discussion with *Real Living* editor Deborah Bibby recently, and as part of the conversation on renovating, she offered advice on how to choose a décor that suits your style. Deb made a point that really resonated with me: she said she could often guess what someone's home might look like by clocking how they dress. It rings true, don't you think? So, with that in mind, perhaps when you're planning your next kitchen – or any kind of design overhaul – open your wardrobe and take inspiration from there.

Happy July,



Anthea Loucas

**ON THE COVER** New England-style clam chowder and crackers (recipe p119) Recipe **Lisa Featherby** Photography **William Meppem** Styling **Emma Knowles** Merchandising **Jerrie-Joy Redman-Lloyd**



## CONTRIBUTORS



### GEORGIA MADDEN

Working at *Homes & Gardens* in London for 10 years gave journalist Georgia Madden the chance to get up close and personal with the latest kitchen gadgetry coming out of Europe.

Since returning to Sydney, she's noticed it's getting smarter than ever. "It amazes me just how intelligent kitchen appliances have become. This new technology is great news for home cooks – particularly those who are time poor or nervous about trying new dishes." See page 104.



### STEVE CORDONY

Steve Cordony works as an interiors stylist on commercial and editorial projects and is style director at large for *Belle* magazine. For this issue he reports on the hottest kitchen trends,

covering hardware such as taps, lights, tiles and accessories. "Which is my favourite look? It would have to be Parisian luxe. I love the materials, such as brass and marble, and the monochrome palette. It's classic but it has an edge. It's smart but it has soul." His feature appears on page 95.



### WILLIAM MEPPEM

A part-time job working in the dark room of a fashion magazine while studying economics led William Meppem to a career behind the camera. That was 25 years ago. He's since become one of the country's most accomplished food and lifestyle photographers. His work has appeared in *GT* for more than 15 years; in this issue he shot our Byron Bay feature (page 150) and the beautiful still-life spread (page 80). "I feel so privileged to have a career doing something I love," he says.

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PHOTOGRAPHY SCOTT HAWKINS (BOOK) & KRISTOFFER PAULSEN (NAVY STRENGTH)

## MARK TUCKEY COTTONS ON

Cotton On is launching a homewares range with local sustainable furniture brand Mark Tuckey. The kitchen highlights include these two-tone stoneware mugs (\$14.95 for two) and linen/cotton-blend tea towels (\$24.95), as well as an ash timber serving bowl and chopping board – all designed with Mark Tuckey's signature breezy, beachy style. [cottonon.com](http://cottonon.com)



**WINTER WARMERS** The hearty recipes in Maggie Beer's *Winter Harvest* (Penguin, \$29.99) are the perfect antidote to the cold weather and, as the title suggests, the book shines the spotlight on the season's star ingredients.



### ICE KING

Michael Madrusan  
of Navy Strength Co.

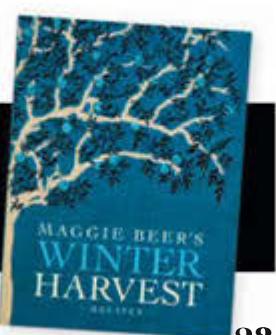
## WHAT'S NEW

## Precise ice

*Navy Strength Ice Co is crafting Australia's coolest ice.*

Anyone who's had a cocktail at Melbourne's The Everleigh (our 2013 Bar of the Year) knows that owner Michael Madrusan is a stickler for integrity, be it in recipe, booze, garnish or vessel. Now that he's opened Navy Strength Ice Co, Australia's first boutique hand-cut ice company, even the ice has integrity. "If you're going to make the best-quality drink you can, you have to consider the ice," he says. "The ice we're making is perfectly clear, so it looks good and is free of any taint or odour, and is a purer, harder block so it keeps the drink cool but dilutes it more slowly than regular ice." Navy Strength operates from The Everleigh using two imported Clinebell machines that can each make a 150kg block of ice every three days using super-filtrated water. The blocks are cut to order using a Japanese ice saw, then a butchers' bandsaw. Each larger block makes about 800 standard-drink ice blocks which can be delivered straight to the doors of Melbourne's restaurants, cafés and bars in Navy Strength's refrigerated van. According to Madrusan, this is just the beginning of his crusade to rid bars of substandard ice. "The plan is to expand to a full factory that can make about 20,000 blocks a week," he says. Word is, he's also in very early talks about extending the crusade to Sydney. Now that's a lot of integrity.

*Navy Strength Ice Co, 150-156 Gertrude St, Melbourne, Vic.  
(03) 9416 2229, [theeverleigh.com](http://theeverleigh.com)* MICHAEL HARDEN





## CALENDAR

### THE SPICE IS RIGHT

Tonka's Adam D'Sylva is turning up the heat at Harvey Norman Chadstone, Victoria, on 15 July, with a Gourmet Institute masterclass on cooking with spice. Tickets are \$60. To book head to [eventopia.co/gourmetinstitute](http://eventopia.co/gourmetinstitute).

### CULTURE CLUB

The permaculture-loving folk from Milkwood are hosting a series of fermentation workshops on 4, 5 and 26 July, in Sydney and Byron Bay (see this issue's recipes using fermented ingredients on page 130). [milkwood.net](http://milkwood.net)

### GET SCHOoled

Want to cook like Bistro Dom or Seppeltsfield's Hentley Farm? Check out the cooking classes this month at Outdoors on Parade in Adelaide. [outdoorsonparade.com.au](http://outdoorsonparade.com.au)

## TV SHOW

### More reality bites

*Nine* turns up the heat in a new culinary contest. Does Australia need another TV cooking competition? Channel Nine hopes the answer is yes as it launches its own late entrant into the hotly contested field of primetime food TV. *The Hotplate*, produced by international entertainment behemoth Endemol, is an expensive gamble on the hope that the nation hasn't yet slaked its thirst with ratings-busters *MasterChef* and *My Kitchen Rules*.

Hosted by Melbourne-based chef Scott Pickett – the restaurateur behind Estelle Bistro, Saint Crispin and the forthcoming ESP – and English food writer Tom Parker Bowles (yes, son of Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall), *The Hotplate* boasts a format that might sound slightly familiar: a state-versus-state competition that involves contestants judging other contestants.

Parker Bowles, however, insists it has more credibility than its amateur-based competition. "This is about family restaurants that have already operated successfully for anywhere from two to 25 years," he says. "It's about the whole restaurant – front of house as well as the food – and they're not rank amateurs who think being on a TV show will somehow miraculously change their lives."

Pickett says the pair opted for a more "warm and fuzzy" approach to the job of mentoring six restaurants through the competition, where \$100,000 is at stake. "I think the world has seen enough of the Gordon Ramsays who storm in and yell at everyone," says Pickett. "It's all about the industry, so for me it's about respect."

*The Hotplate* launches later this month on Channel Nine. LARISSA DUBECKI

**BOX SET**  
*The Hotplate's* Scott Pickett (left) and Tom Parker Bowles.



**GOODBYE, BONES** Australian chef James Henry is closing the doors to his Parisian restaurant, *Bones*, this August. As for what he's doing next? "I have an idea for something, but it's in a very juvenile stage," he tells us. Watch this space.



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**HUGH WENNERBOM,  
PRODUCE GUY**

*Hey Hugh, I've got a serious salad habit, but I'm concerned that winter is going to cramp my style. Can you help?* Ah, winter, the season for what I like to call cooked salads: dishes that combine grilled, roasted or sautéed vegetables (for a blend of sweet and savoury) with more of the same that's diced, shaved or sliced raw (for a fresh lift and crisp texture). Think beetroot or Brussels sprouts, rainbow chard or chicory, fennel or kohlrabi, radicchio or rapa, snow peas or sugar snaps. Season these beauties in a sprightly fashion with anchovies,

feta, Parmigiano, herbs, lemon juice, nuts, olives or vinegar (choose one or two seasonings to keep it simple and elegant). Right now I'm thinking about chef Jared Ingwersoll's dish of balsamic roasted beetroot tossed with wafer-thin slivers of raw beet, seasoned with black olives sautéed in honey and topped with sheep's milk feta – a wonderful entrée for a regional dinner he cooked some years ago. Tonight for dinner? I'm about to pick rainbow chard and green garlic from the patch. I'll melt a couple of anchovy fillets in olio, sauté two-thirds of the chard with the chopped garlic and a splash of wine, then fold in the rest of the chard, raw and finely shredded. A fine foil to serve with a golden-roasted Holmabrae "Bessie" chook.

## SIGNATURE DRINK

### Ramblin' Rascal Tavern's Tombstone

*A serious libation that's not for the faint of heart.*

"This is a drink best enjoyed while listening to the blues or contemplating life and the eventual arrival of death," says Ramblin' Rascal Tavern co-owner Charlie Lehmann. "It separates the strong from the weak and sparks intellectual rants. Probably not suitable for the staff Christmas party is all I'm sayin'." The friendliest rowdy bar in Sydney, the Rascal also happens to be conveniently located immediately under GT HQ. We'll see you there for a ramble and a rant or two. *Ramblin' Rascal Tavern, Basement, 60 Park St, Sydney, NSW*

> Shake 60ml Bourbon (the Rascals use Booker's), 10ml sugar syrup, two dashes of barrel-aged bitters over chipped ice,

double-strain into a chilled cocktail glass, garnish with a whiskey-soaked cherry and serve.



**IN THE PINK** These eye-popping 100 per cent cotton napkins in Moroccan Pink from designer Alli Keirnan will breathe new life into your table setting. There are four designs to choose from; \$69 for four. [allikeirnan.com](http://allikeirnan.com)





## NUT JOB

Ladurée has unveiled a macadamia-flavoured macaron, exclusive to our shores, \$36 for a box of eight. [laduree.com](http://laduree.com)



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## THE PRODUCERS

### Willock Park English longhorns

*The oldest breed of British beef cattle are celebrated for their depth of flavour.*

**WHO** In Meningie, South Australia, meat maestro Richard Gunner and his wife, Elizabeth, have overseen the development of Australia's first English longhorn cattle herd, with 33 pedigree cows and bulls kept as stud animals. A further herd of 150-odd longhorns cross-bred with South Devon or Angus is raised for beef, sold through the Gunner family's Feast! Fine Foods butcher shops.

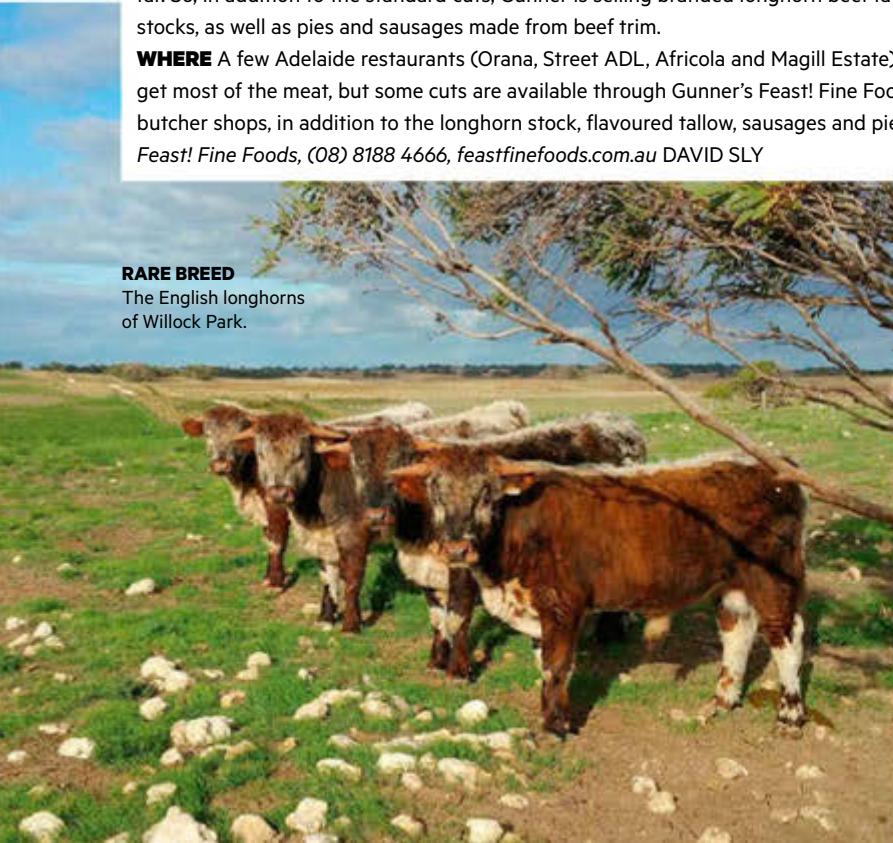
**WHY** Four years ago, Adelaide's Jock Zonfrillo, owner-chef of Orana and Street ADL, encouraged Gunner to start breeding longhorns, the oldest breed of British beef cattle, for their great depth of flavour. It hasn't been an easy project, Gunner says, because these big, bullock-sized beasts take at least 30 months to reach an average carcass weight of 450kg.

**HOW** To maximise the return on these rare beasts, Gunner commissioned British-born chef Phil Whitmarsh (whose nose-to-tail menu was celebrated when he cooked at The Daniel O'Connell Hotel) to use every last bit of the few longhorns butchered so far. So, in addition to the standard cuts, Gunner is selling branded longhorn beef fat, stocks, as well as pies and sausages made from beef trim.

**WHERE** A few Adelaide restaurants (Orana, Street ADL, Africola and Magill Estate) get most of the meat, but some cuts are available through Gunner's Feast! Fine Foods butcher shops, in addition to the longhorn stock, flavoured tallow, sausages and pies. *Feast! Fine Foods, (08) 8188 4666, [feastfinefoods.com.au](http://feastfinefoods.com.au)* DAVID SLY

#### RARE BREED

The English longhorns of Willock Park.



## GOURMET TRAVELLER HOT PLATES

*Our restaurant critics' picks of the latest and best eats, updated weekly on our website:*

[gourmettraveller.com.au](http://gourmettraveller.com.au)

#### VICTORIA

Chef Harry Lilai has sold his acclaimed Italian-focused Town Hall Hotel to Sean Donovan, the chef-publican who put Footscray's Station Hotel and South Melbourne's Wayside Inn on the culinary map. Donovan is expecting to take over the reins this month, with a minor refurbishment in the works. As with his previous pubs, Donovan will focus on quality meat and seafood simply cooked.

#### LOS ANGELES

From Jon Shook and Vinny Dotolo – the trailblazing chefs behind Los Angeles restaurants Son of a Gun, Animal, Trois Mec and Petit Trois – comes the casual Italian eatery **Jon & Vinny's**. The food is simple: pizza, pasta and meat cooked the way the pair have always enjoyed eating them, in fun, friendly surrounds.

#### BRISBANE

Brisbane's **E'cco Bistro** has replaced head chef Sam Brading with Simon Palmer (formerly of Gerard's Bistro). Palmer trained under Timothy Montgomery at Bacchus in Newcastle, NSW, and worked for two years with Alejandro Cancino at The Urbane Group. This is his first gig as head chef.

#### CABARITA BEACH

Former Esquire chef Ben Devlin has left the Brisbane fine-diner in pursuit of a sea change. He's now heading the kitchen at **Paper Daisy** (see page 159), the restaurant at luxe new beach hotel Halcyon House on the NSW far north coast. Devlin's menu is bright and breezy, with a focus on the region's best produce and a strong seafood offering.

#### PERTH

**Shadow Wine Bar & Dining Room** is the restaurant at Northbridge's new **Alex Hotel**. The menu is a blend of classic and contemporary, featuring the likes of octopus teamed with wild succulents and potato skordalia. Similar liberties have also been taken with the cicchetti selection: pickled sardine toasts and crab on potato chips might vary in their Venetian-ness, but they hit the spot as rewarding bar snacks.





**PERSONAL BEST**  
Simon Kruger (left)  
and Nick Malanczak  
of Mary's in Perth.

## ON THE PASS

### Simon Kruger & Nick Malanczak, Mary's, Perth

Mary's serves everything from black vinegar beef pasta to Korean steak tartare. How would you describe your food?

**Nick:** I feel like Mary's has this New York thing happening. There's a definite Asian feel to it, but there's also this Italian vibe, too. Let's call it Asian, but not-quite-Asian. It's the food that we want to cook but, more importantly, it's the food that we want to eat.

**It's just you guys in the kitchen at Mary's. Does being a two-man show force you to reel in some of your ideas?**

**Simon:** Not at all. If anything, I think our menu is more out-there. From go to whoa, what we're putting out is mine and Nicko's stuff.

**Is there much crossover between what you guys do in the evenings and the daytime?**

**Nick:** We serve Mary Street Bakery bread, plus we use the bakery's doughnuts in one of the desserts. During the day, the bakery has our squid-ink pasta. Your opening menu features plenty of influences from Korea and Japan. What's next?

**Simon:** Our next menu is going to be Chinese. We're planning on getting to Sichuan later this year for three weeks to have a look around.

Mary's, 509 Beaufort St, Highgate, WA, 0429 944 861

MAX VEENHUYZEN

?

EXPLAINER

### JAPANESE CURRY

Curry might not seem like the most Japanese of foods but, like tempura and mayonnaise, this introduced dish has been embraced by Japan as its own. Introduced by the British Navy in the 19th century, curry was used by Japan's navy to feed its sailors nutritiously and economically. They brought their taste for karē home with them, laying the foundation for curry's rise to fame. While scores of regional variations exist, Japanese curry is generally thicker, milder and sweeter than an Indian curry. In Australia it's no longer just food-court fare. At Cho Cho San, mud crabs are tossed through the sauce, while another Sydney restaurant, Sepia, scents scampi with Japanese curry spices.

MAX VEENHUYZEN

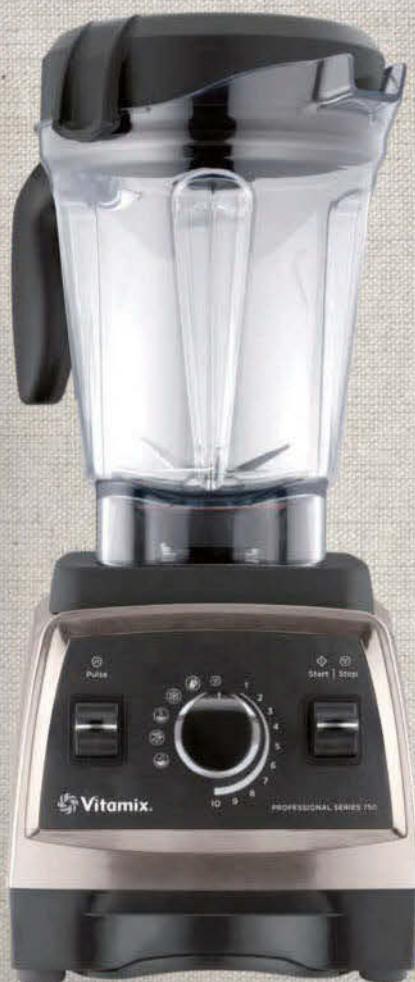
**BLADE STUNNERS** Rising Japanese blacksmith Yu Kurosaki handcrafts his knives using rare zebrawood and R2 powdered steel. His début line, Shizuku, is priced from \$239.95 and available at [chefsarmoury.com](http://chefsarmoury.com).



### THAT'S THE SPIRIT

Four exciting new gins have landed on our shores: Greenhook Ginsmiths American Dry Gin (\$79.95), German distiller Ferdinand's Saar Dry Gin (\$79.95), Cambridge Distillery's Japanese Style Gin (\$129.95) made with yuzu, sancho pepper, shiso and sesame, and the G&T-friendly Elephant Gin (\$72.95) from London. [luxewinespirits.com.au](http://luxewinespirits.com.au)





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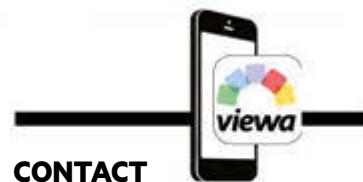
**Dr Joanna McMillan**  
PhD Qualified  
Nutritionist

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## READER DINNER



### CONTACT

Scan this page with the free **viewa** app to contact the restaurant and make your booking.



# Playing with fire

Lennox Hastie is blazing a trail at his new Sydney restaurant, Firedoor, and you're invited to join the party.

### Lennox Hastie can handle the heat.

The chef, now based in Sydney, spent five years stoking and smoking in the Basque Country at acclaimed wood-fire restaurant Etxebarri, so it comes as no surprise that his new restaurant, Firedoor, in Sydney's Surry Hills is the hottest ticket in town. "When you take something as good as raw fire, a good-quality ingredient and a bit of care, that's all it requires," says Hastie.

As at Etxebarri, the Firedoor kitchen burns everything from olive and ironbark to wine barrels and grapevines. "You say to people 'wood-fired' and they think pizza; you say 'grilled', they think barbecue," says Hastie. "This is only one expression of burning."

At this month's Fine Dining Lovers reader dinner, Hastie's menu showcases the season's best ingredients and the subtle flavours that result from cooking over embers. Kicking things off on the night is a rich, set-to-order Jersey curd, smoked using cherry wood. Slivers of guanciale and pecans cling to winter leaves charred over apple wood. "It's a beautiful combination at this time of year," says Hastie. Aged lamb rump cap is accompanied by cavolo nero and borlotti beans, while banana ice-cream with wild honeycomb and ganache (made with smoked water) ends the meal.

"As humans, I think we're all addicted to fire, to a certain degree," says Hastie. "It's such a beautiful way to cook." You've got our attention, chef. ●

*Join us for dinner at 6.30pm on Monday 27 July at Firedoor, 23-33 Mary St, Surry Hills, NSW. The cost of \$130 per person includes seven courses, wines by the glass, S.Pellegrino water and a \$10 donation to the Ovarian Cancer Research Foundation. To book, call (02) 8204 0800. For more on the OCRF, call 1300 OVARIAN or visit [ocrf.com.au](http://ocrf.com.au).*

#### HOT PROPERTY

Above from left: Chef Lennox Hastie; banana ice-cream with smoked ganache and wild honeycomb.

### FIREDOOR

#### *Ferdinand's Gin Cocktail*

- \* Wood-fired bread
- \* Smoked Jersey curd with pickled vegetables
- \* Wild kingfish with fennel and herb oil
- \* Grilled leaves with guanciale and pecans
- \* Gurnard with cime di rapa and Jerusalem artichoke
- \* Brussels sprouts and smoked ham hock
- \* Lamb rump cap with cavolo nero and borlotti beans

*Si Vintners 2012 Margaret River Sémillon Chardonnay, WA*

*Brash Higgins 2014 'FRNC' Cabernet Franc, McLaren Vale, SA*

- \* Banana ice-cream with smoked ganache and wild honeycomb

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EVENT

5

July

29

BRISBANE



#### MATT MORAN

Putting produce first, with slow-cooked lamb, hummus, tomato salsa and mint, and seared kingfish with wasabi and avocado.

FOR THE RECIPES FROM THIS EVENT  
VISIT [HN.COM.AU/GOURMET-INSTITUTE](http://HN.COM.AU/GOURMET-INSTITUTE)



## PADDOCK TO PLATE with **Matt Moran** ARIA BRISBANE

*With one foot planted on the farm and the other in the restaurant kitchen, Matt Moran bridges the gap between country and city with consistently delicious results.*

They say you are what you eat. Or indeed what you cook. In the case of Matt Moran and his slow-cooked lamb with hummus, tomato salsa and mint you could say that it draws together his family background (the meat being Moran family lamb), his experience growing up in multicultural Australia and his

love of no-nonsense cooking. But you could also say that it's a great example of how the Aria chef has a passion for putting great produce centre-plate. And whether it's the lamb, or Moran's seared kingfish with avocado and wasabi, he's all about connecting producers and the plate in the tastiest of ways.

#### EVENT DETAILS

CHEF  
MATT MORAN

TOPIC  
PADDOCK TO PLATE

LOCATION  
HARVEY NORMAN ASPLEY,  
1411-1419 GYMPIE RD,  
ASPLEY, QLD

DATE & TIME  
7PM, WEDNESDAY 29 JULY

TICKETS  
\$60 EACH

TO BOOK  
[EVENTOPIA.CO/GOURMETINSTITUTE](http://EVENTOPIA.CO/GOURMETINSTITUTE)

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# Fare exchange

Recipes you've requested from Australia's leading restaurants.

**INNOCENT BYSTANDER** Chicken with oregano dressing

**ROUGH RICE** Rice bowl with braised oxtail and mole rojo

**MUSE** Pork hock croque-monsieur

**MARQUE** Honeycomb with cultured cream



Muse's pork hock  
croque-monsieur

(RECIPE P37)

**CHICKEN** Porto  
“Oslo” spoon from  
Third Drawer Down.  
Napkin from Pure  
and General.

**CROQUE-**  
**MONSIEUR** Porto  
“Oslo” knife from

Third Drawer Down.  
Linen table-runner  
(used as napkin)  
from Pure and  
General. All other  
props stylist's own.  
Stockists p183.



Innocent Bystander's  
chicken with oregano  
dressing (RECIPE P36)



**RICE BOWL** Porto  
“Oslo” copper fork from  
Third Drawer Down. All  
other props stylist’s  
own. Stockists p183.

Rough Rice’s rice  
bowl with braised  
oxtail and mole rojo

*“I’ve never tasted chicken as succulent as the brined bird at Innocent Bystander. Would you ask for the recipe?”*

**Sandra Pozzebon, Fitzroy North, Vic**

### Chicken with oregano dressing

*Start this recipe a day ahead to brine the chicken.*

**Prep time 10 mins, cook 30 mins**

**(plus cooling, brining)**

**Serves 4 (pictured p35)**

6 boned chicken Marylands, skin on  
(ask your butcher to remove the bones)

1 tbsp olive oil  
Oregano, flat-leaf parsley and lemon  
wedges, to serve

#### Brine

½ head of garlic  
50 gm sea salt flakes  
25 gm honey  
Finely grated rind of ½ lemon

1 fresh bay leaf

½ tsp black peppercorns

#### Lemon-oregano dressing

100 ml olive oil  
Juice of 1 lemon  
1 golden shallot, finely diced  
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped  
2 tsp salted capers, rinsed, finely chopped  
1 tsp flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped  
1 tsp dried oregano

**1** For brine, place ingredients and 2 litres of water in a large saucepan, bring to the boil, then remove from heat and cool completely. Add chicken and refrigerate overnight.

**2** Preheat oven to 180C. Drain chicken (discard brine) and pat dry with paper towels. Heat oil in a frying pan over medium-high heat and cook chicken in batches until golden brown and crisp all over (6-8 minutes). Transfer to an oven tray lined with baking paper and roast until cooked through (12-15 minutes).

**3** Meanwhile, for lemon-oregano dressing, whisk ingredients together in a bowl and season to taste. Drizzle dressing over hot chicken, scatter with oregano and flat-leaf parsley and serve with lemon wedges.

*“I visited the MONA Market in April and the Rough Rice stand was throwing together some awesome rice bowls. Would they be happy to share a recipe?”*

**Tanya McDonald, Hobart, Tas**

### Rice bowl with braised oxtail and mole rojo

*Rough Rice uses kangaroo tail and makes its own chilli oil; we’ve used oxtail and bought the oil.*

**Prep time 30 mins, cook 4 hrs**

**(plus cooling, standing)**

**Serves 8**

2 tbsp chilli oil  
2 oxtails (about 1.2kg)  
400 gm canned tomatoes, chopped  
375 ml pale ale  
2 onions, unpeeled, quartered  
3 garlic cloves, unpeeled  
10 black peppercorns  
1 rosemary sprig

Coriander and toasted black and white  
sesame seeds and lime cheeks, to serve  
**Salsa picante**

½ tsp each allspice, coriander seeds and  
cumin seeds  
6 red serrano chillies (or another small  
red chilli)  
4 garlic cloves, coarsely chopped  
15 gm (3cm piece) ginger, coarsely chopped  
1½ tbsp chilli oil  
1½ tbsp white vinegar  
½ tsp raw caster sugar

#### Mole rojo

2 onions, unpeeled, halved  
2 heads of garlic  
80 ml (1½ cup) chilli oil  
2 dried guajillo chillies (see note)  
1 each dried habanero, mulato and chipotle  
chilli (see note)  
4 dried hibiscus flowers (see note)  
6 coriander roots, leaves reserved for garnish  
10 black peppercorns  
½ tsp each cumin seeds, coriander seeds and  
ground allspice, toasted for 2 minutes  
(see cook’s notes p184)  
¼ tsp ground cloves  
800 gm canned tomatoes, chopped  
1 cinnamon quill  
50 gm each walnuts and almonds  
50 gm day-old sourdough bread, crusts  
discarded, cut into 2cm cubes  
20 gm dark chocolate (60%-66% cocoa solids),  
finely chopped  
1 bunch cavolo nero: 3 leaves reserved for  
rice, remainder coarsely chopped  
Juice of 2 limes  
**Rough rice**

75 gm (1½ cup) each pepitas and  
sunflower seeds

500 gm brown rice  
2 spring onions, finely sliced

**1** For braised oxtail, heat chilli oil in a casserole over medium-high heat, add oxtail and cook, turning, until golden brown all over (5-6 minutes). Add tomato, ale, onion, garlic peppercorns, rosemary and enough water to just cover oxtail. Bring to the boil, then reduce heat to medium and simmer, skimming surface occasionally and adding more water if needed, until meat is falling from the bone (2½-3 hours). Strain, reserving stock for mole rojo, shred meat (discard bones and other solids) and set aside until required.

**2** Meanwhile, for salsa picante, dry-roast spices until fragrant (30-45 seconds; see cook’s notes p184), then grind with a mortar and pestle. Combine with remaining ingredients in a food processor and process to a smooth purée. Transfer to a saucepan over medium-high heat and cook, stirring occasionally, until fragrant (5-7 minutes). Return to food processor, add 400ml water and process to a smooth paste. Salsa picante will keep stored in an airtight container for a week.

**3** For mole rojo, preheat oven to 180C and line an oven tray with baking paper. Drizzle onion and garlic with 1 tbsp chilli oil, place on prepared tray and roast until tender (25-30 minutes).

When cool enough to handle, peel and set aside. Meanwhile, place dried chillies and hibiscus flowers in a bowl, cover with boiling water and stand until softened (10-15 minutes), then strain, reserving water. Wearing gloves, carefully remove and discard chilli seeds and membranes. Process softened chilli and hibiscus flowers, roasted onion and garlic, coriander roots and spices (except cinnamon quill) in a food processor to a purée and season to taste. Heat 1 tbsp chilli oil in a large casserole over medium heat, add paste and stir constantly until fragrant and thick (6-7 minutes). Add tomato and cinnamon quill, reduce heat to low and simmer until thickened (15-18 minutes). Meanwhile, heat remaining chilli oil in a frying pan over high heat, add nuts, bread and a pinch of salt and fry until toasted (4-6 minutes). Drain on paper towels, place in a food processor and process to a paste, adding a reserved chilli-hibiscus water to loosen, then add to tomato mixture. Remove cinnamon quill, add chocolate, remaining reserved chilli-hibiscus water and reserved oxtail stock and bring to the simmer over medium heat. Purée with a hand-held blender and stir in cavolo nero, lime juice and reserved oxtail.

**4** For rough rice, heat a frying pan over medium-high heat, toast pepitas and sunflower seeds until golden brown (2-4 minutes) and set aside. In a saucepan, bring 3 litres of water to the boil, add rice, bring back to the boil and cook rice, stirring occasionally, until tender (25-35 minutes). Strain, transfer to a large bowl, stir in spring onion and cavolo nero and season to taste. Spoon into serving bowls, top with mole rojo, scatter with coriander and toasted sesame seeds, and serve with salsa picante and lime cheeks.

**Note** Guajillo, habanero, mulato and chipotle chillies are available at Mexican grocers, [herbies.com.au](http://herbies.com.au) and [fireworksfoods.com.au](http://fireworksfoods.com.au). Hibiscus flowers, also called Jamaica flowers, are available at Fireworks Foods and Fiji Market (see stockists p183).

*"I love a good croque-monsieur, and the one at Muse in the Hunter is one of the best. What's their secret?"*

James Glanville, Newcastle, NSW

### Pork hock croque-monsieur

**Prep time 15 mins, cook 2½ hrs  
(plus cooling)**

**Makes 4 (pictured p34)**

- 2 smoked pork hocks (about 800gm each)
- 2 litres (8 cups) chicken stock
- 300 ml dry white wine
- 2 each onions, celery stalks and carrots, chopped
- 8 thyme sprigs
- 2 garlic cloves
- 8 thick slices sourdough bread
- 150 gm Gruyère, finely grated
- Dijon béchamel**
- 60 gm butter, diced
- 60 gm plain flour
- 400 ml milk, warmed
- 100 gm Dijon mustard
- ½ tsp finely grated nutmeg

### Watercress salad

- 2 cups (loosely packed) watercress
- 8 cornichons, halved
- 3 golden shallots, thinly sliced on a mandolin
- Juice of 2 lemons
- 2 tbsp olive oil

- 1** Rinse hocks, place in a large saucepan with stock, wine, vegetables, thyme and garlic and bring to the boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer uncovered until meat easily comes away from the bone (1½-2 hours). Set hocks aside to cool. Strain liquid into a saucepan and boil until reduced by two-thirds (10-15 minutes). Shred meat, add to reduced stock, season to taste and refrigerate.
- 2** Meanwhile, for Dijon béchamel, melt butter in a saucepan over medium heat, then gradually add flour, stirring until smooth (3-4 minutes). Gradually whisk in warmed milk and stir continuously until thickened (4-5 minutes). Remove from heat and stir in mustard and nutmeg.
- 3** Preheat oven to 180°C and line an oven tray with baking paper. Generously spread half the bread slices with béchamel, top with pork mixture and sandwich with remaining bread. Scatter generously with Gruyère and season to taste. Place on prepared tray and bake until cheese melts (8-10 minutes), then finish under a hot grill for a golden-brown top (3-5 minutes).
- 4** For watercress salad, toss ingredients together in a bowl and serve with croque-monsieurs.

*"The honeycomb dessert at Marque is magnificent. I'd love to attempt to recreate it at home."*

Sandra Pin, Potts Point, NSW

### Honeycomb with cultured cream

*At Marque they culture their own cream. Try our recipe on p138 or buy a good crème fraîche instead.*

**Prep time 5 mins, cook 10 mins (plus setting)**

**Serves 6-8**

- 415 gm caster sugar
- 150 gm liquid glucose
- 65 gm single blossom honey (such as Malfroy's Gold; see note)
- 18 gm bicarbonate of soda
- 200 gm crème fraîche, to serve

**1** Line a 20cm-square cake tin with baking paper. Stir sugar, glucose, honey and 75ml water in a deep saucepan over medium-high heat until dissolved, wiping down sides of pan with a wet pastry brush to prevent crystals forming. Boil until sugar syrup reaches 160°C on a sugar thermometer (8-10 minutes). Remove from heat and whisk in bicarbonate of soda (mixture will foam up). Working quickly, pour mixture into prepared tin and leave to cool and set (1-2 hours).

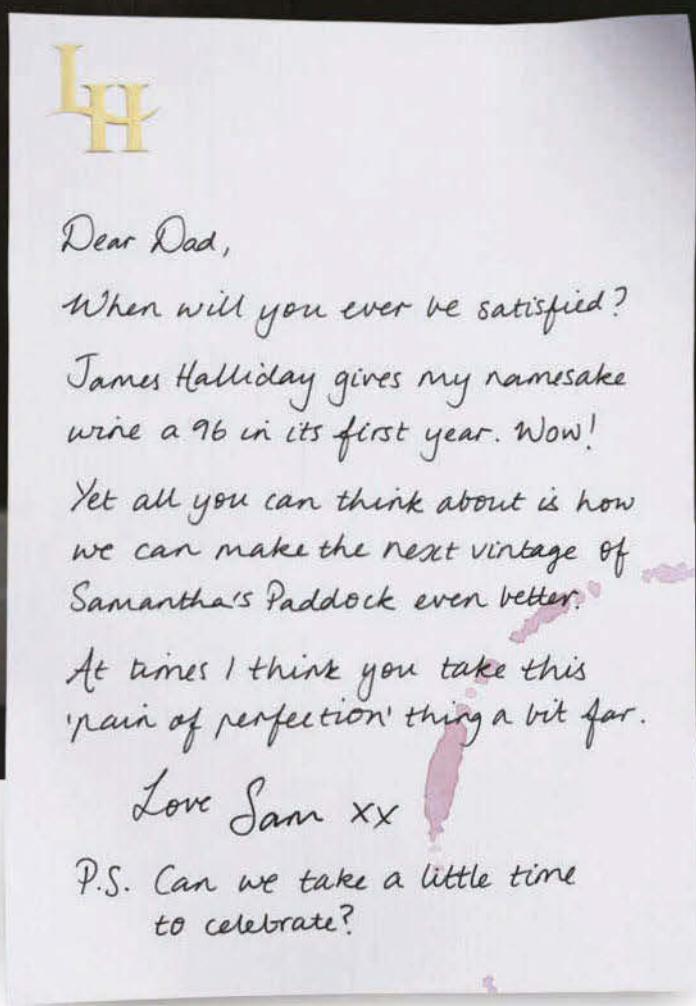
**2** When cool, break honeycomb into shards. Honeycomb will keep stored in an airtight container for a week. Serve honeycomb shards with crème fraîche.

**Note** Malfroy's Gold honey is available online at [malfroygold.com.au](http://malfroygold.com.au).

### REQUEST A RECIPE

To request a recipe, write to Fare Exchange, *Australian Gourmet Traveller*, GPO Box 4088, Sydney, NSW 2001, or email [fareexchange@bauer-media.com.au](mailto:fareexchange@bauer-media.com.au). Please include the restaurant's name and address or business card, as well as your name and address.





# Quick meals

**Lisa Featherby** makes midwinter meals a cinch with these satisfying speedy numbers.

- 1 Orecchiette with cavolo nero and porcini
- 2 Brisket burgers with cheddar, slaw and comeback sauce
- 3 Flat-iron steak with red wine and ginger sauce and crushed potatoes
- 4 Winter salad of broccoli, apple and kale with sesame dressing
- 5 Kung pao chicken
- 6 Cream of fennel and potato soup
- 7 Spiced okra with yoghurt
- 8 Shakshuka
- 9 Caramelised pink grapefruit and vanilla ice-cream

1 Orecchiette with cavolo nero and porcini (RECIPE P40)



ORECCHIETTE All props stylist's own.



## 1 Orecchiette with cavolo nero and porcini

Dried porcini add a real flavour hit to pasta and sauces. If you can find interesting fresh forest mushrooms, they'd also work well here.

Serves 4 (pictured p39)

- 30 gm dried porcini
- 2½ tbsp olive oil
- 150 gm mild pancetta, diced
- ½ onion, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- 80 ml dry white wine
- 1 bunch cavolo nero, stalks removed, leaves coarsely chopped
- 400 gm dried orecchiette
- Extra-virgin olive oil and shaved parmesan, to serve

1 Rehydrate porcini in a small bowl with 150ml boiling water for 5 minutes.

2 Heat olive oil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat, add pancetta and fry until browned (3-5 minutes). Add onion and garlic and sauté, stirring occasionally, until tender and just golden (5-7 minutes). Add wine and cavolo nero and cook until wine is reduced and cavolo nero wilts (3-5 minutes).

3 Meanwhile, cook pasta in a large saucepan of salted boiling water until al dente (10-12 minutes). Drain, add to cavolo nero and season to taste.

4 Drain porcini, reserving a little water, chop and add to pan with a few splashes of porcini water to loosen the pasta. Gently combine and serve hot topped with a drizzle of extra-virgin olive oil and plenty of parmesan.

## 2 Brisket burgers with cheddar, slaw and comeback sauce

The comeback sauce is a chilli mayonnaise from Mississippi that's used as a dipping sauce and salad dressing; here we've dressed our slaw with it for a nice hint of heat. We've minced brisket for these burgers – the good fat content produces a rich patty. If you'd prefer a lighter burger, use minced chuck.

Makes 4

- 600 gm beef brisket, coarsely minced
- 2 tsp olive oil
- 150 gm cheddar slices, or other melting cheese
- 600 gm cabbage, finely sliced on a mandolin
- 1 carrot, cut into julienne
- 4 soft burger buns, halved
- Pickles and potato chips, to serve
- Comeback sauce**
- 120 gm mayonnaise
- 50 gm Sriracha sauce
- 1 tbsp tomato sauce
- ½ small onion, finely chopped

1 Preheat oven to 180C and heat a baking tray. Pat beef into four 2cm-thick patties that are slightly larger than your buns. Heat a non-stick ovenproof frying pan over medium-high heat, add oil and patties and cook, turning occasionally, until browned (8-9 minutes for medium-rare to medium). Top with cheddar, transfer to heated tray and place in the oven until cheddar melts and burgers are cooked to your liking (a further 1-2 minutes for medium).

2 For comeback sauce, whisk ingredients in a bowl to combine, then season to taste.

3 Meanwhile, toast buns, cut side down only in the same pan you cooked burgers in over high heat (2-3 minutes).

4 Combine cabbage and carrot in a bowl with 1-2 tbsp comeback sauce. Spread bun bases with extra sauce, top with cheeseburger, slaw and pickles, sandwich with bun tops and serve hot with potato chips.

## 3 Flat-iron steak with red wine and ginger sauce and crushed potatoes

Ginger and red wine work surprisingly well together, and give this steak a lovely lift.

Serves 4

- 4 flat-iron steaks (200gm each), at room temperature
- Blanched green beans, to serve
- Crushed kipfler potatoes**
- 500 gm kipfler potatoes, scrubbed and cut into 3cm pieces
- 40 gm butter, coarsely chopped
- 2 tbsp coarsely chopped flat-leaf parsley
- Red wine and ginger sauce**
- 300 ml red wine
- 3 golden shallots, thinly sliced
- 20 gm ginger, cut into julienne
- 1 tsp red wine vinegar
- 80 gm softened butter

1 For crushed kipfler potatoes, place potatoes in a saucepan, cover with cold salted water, bring to

the boil and cook until tender (15-20 minutes). Drain, crush with a fork, stir in butter and parsley and season to taste. Keep warm.

2 Meanwhile, season steaks with sea salt and pepper and fry in a frying pan over medium heat, turning occasionally, until steak is browned and cooked to your liking (3-4 minutes each side for medium-rare; steak will be firm yet giving when pressed). Remove from heat and set aside to rest covered with foil for 10 minutes.

3 For red wine and ginger sauce, bring wine, shallots, ginger, vinegar and ½ tsp cracked black pepper to the boil in a small saucepan, then reduce over high heat to about 60ml (around 15 minutes). Season to taste and gradually whisk in knobs of butter, whisking well between each addition, until smooth and emulsified (1-2 minutes).

4 Serve steaks thickly sliced with crushed potatoes, green beans and sauce spooned on top.

## 4 Winter salad of broccoli, apple and kale with sesame dressing

It's peak season for kale and broccoli – and time for a great crunchy and textural winter salad.

Serves 4 as a light meal

- 2 tbsp each sunflower seeds and sesame seeds
- 1 bunch kale, stalks removed, leaves coarsely chopped
- 1 small head broccoli (about 350gm), thinly shaved on a mandolin
- 2 small pink lady apples, unpeeled, cut into matchsticks
- ½ cup (firmly packed) mint
- A handful of mixed sprouts (such as mung bean, onion and chickpea)
- Sesame dressing**
- 60 gm tahini
- 2 tbsp rice wine vinegar
- 2 tbsp light soy sauce
- 2 tbsp olive oil

1 Dry-roast sunflower and sesame seeds (1-2 minutes; see cook's notes p184). Set aside.

2 For sesame dressing, whisk ingredients in a bowl to combine and season to taste.

3 Rub kale with your hands to soften slightly, then combine in a bowl with broccoli, apple and mint. Add sesame dressing, toss to combine, then add seeds and sprouts and serve.

## 5 Kung pao chicken

If you'd like a thicker sauce, add a slurry of a teaspoon of cornflour mixed with a tablespoon of cold water in the last two minutes of cooking.

Serves 4

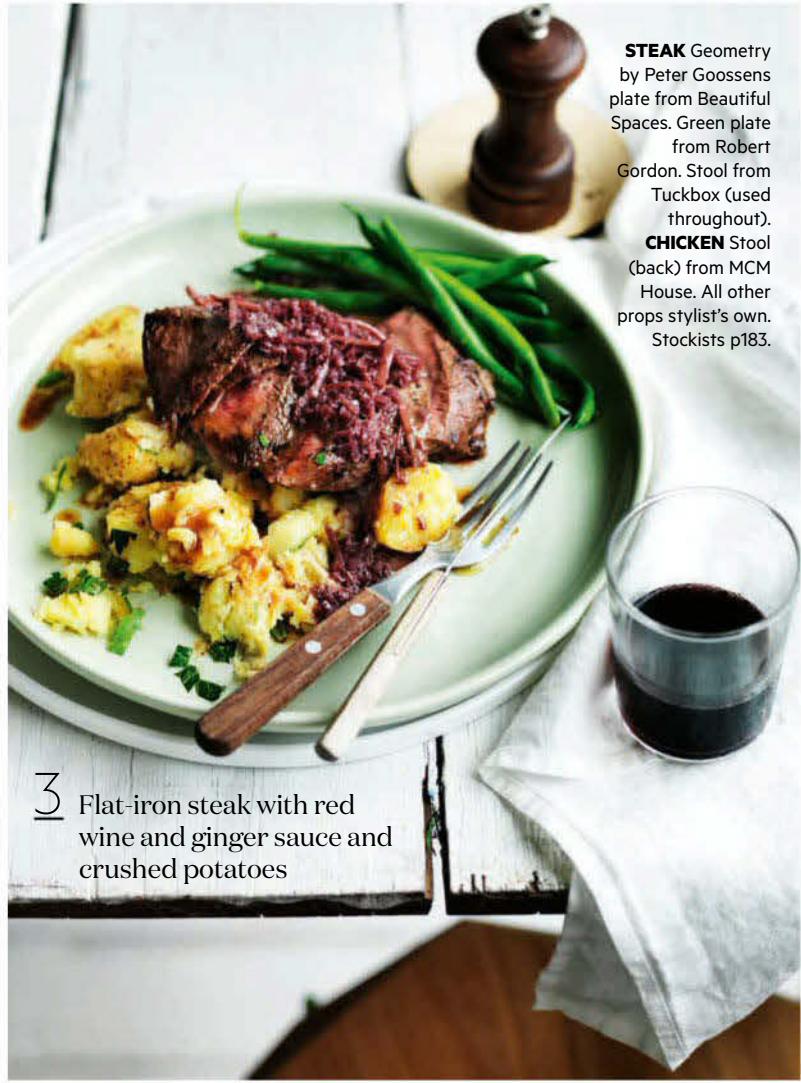
- 4 dried long red chillies, coarsely chopped
- 1½ tbsp peanut oil
- 3 tsp Sichuan peppercorns, coarsely crushed with a mortar and pestle
- 1½ tbsp julienned ginger
- 80 ml (½ cup) chicken stock, or water
- 60 ml (¼ cup) Chinkiang vinegar (see note)
- 2 tbsp Shaoxing wine
- 2 tbsp light soy sauce

**BURGER** Plate and glass from Citta Design. Small bowl from Mud Australia. Hay wooden chopping board from Cult. **SALAD** Large plate from

Robert Gordon. Green plate from Bison Home. **TEXT PAGE** Hay rounded board from Cult. All other props stylist's own. Stockists p183.



2 Brisket burger with cheddar, slaw and comeback sauce



3 Flat-iron steak with red wine and ginger sauce and crushed potatoes



4 Winter salad of broccoli, apple and kale with sesame dressing



5 Kung pao chicken

**STEAK** Geometry by Peter Goossens plate from Beautiful Spaces. Green plate from Robert Gordon. Stool from Tuckbox (used throughout). **CHICKEN** Stool (back) from MCM House. All other props stylist's own. Stockists p183.



6 Cream of fennel and potato soup



7 Spiced okra with yoghurt

OKRA Hay  
"Kaleido" tray from Cult. Glass (front) from Country Road. SOUP Bowl (back) from Country Road.

Bowl (front) from Bison Home. Salt dish from Robert Gordon. All other props stylist's own. Stockists p183.



8 Shakshuka



9 Caramelised pink grapefruit and vanilla ice-cream

GRAPEFRUIT Plate from Robert Gordon. SHAKSHUKA Wooden tray from Country Road. TEXT PAGE Jug from Country Road. All other props stylist's own. Stockists p183.

1 tsp sesame oil  
 2 spring onions, thinly sliced, plus extra to serve  
 100 gm roasted peanuts  
 Steamed long-grain rice and coriander (optional), to serve  
**Marinated chicken**  
 750 gm chicken thigh fillets (about 5), cut into 1cm pieces  
 2 tbsp Shaoxing wine  
 1 tbsp dark soy sauce

**1** For marinated chicken, place chicken in a bowl with wine, soy sauce and a large pinch of white pepper and set aside.  
**2** Heat a wok over high heat until hot. Add chillies and stir-fry until toasted (1 minute), then set aside. Add oil and Sichuan peppercorns and stir-fry until fragrant (1 minute). Add ginger and marinated chicken in 2 batches and stir-fry until chicken is cooked and golden brown (3-4 minutes). Return all chicken to the pan along with stock, vinegar, Shaoxing, soy, sesame oil and spring onion and bring sauce to the boil. Add peanuts and toasted chillies, toss to combine and serve on rice scattered with extra spring onion and coriander.  
**Note** Chinkiang, a black Chinese vinegar, is available from Asian grocers. If it's unavailable, substitute 1-2 tbsp malt vinegar or to taste.

## 6 Cream of fennel and potato soup

Fennel and potato are a great combination and make a lovely soup for a chilly night in.

Serves 4

1 tbsp olive oil  
 20 gm butter, coarsely chopped  
 2 small or 1 large fennel bulbs (300gm), coarsely chopped, fronds reserved  
 ½ large onion, coarsely chopped  
 2 garlic cloves, thinly sliced  
 1 tsp fennel seeds, coarsely crushed  
 300 gm floury potatoes (about 2), such as sebago, peeled and diced  
 1 tbsp Pernod (optional)  
 800 ml chicken stock  
 240 ml pouring cream, plus extra to serve  
 4 thick slices miche sourdough, toasted and buttered

**1** Heat olive oil and butter in a large saucepan over high heat. Add fennel, onion, garlic and fennel seeds and sauté, stirring occasionally, until tender and starting to caramelise (4-6 minutes). Add potato and deglaze pan with Pernod or water. Add stock, season to taste, cover and bring to the boil, then boil uncovered and stirring occasionally until potato is tender (around 15 minutes). Add cream, bring back to the boil and simmer until potato starts to break down (2-4 minutes). Season to taste and blitz in a blender, or with a hand-held blender, until smooth, adding a little extra boiling water to thin it a little if necessary. Serve hot topped with fennel fronds, extra cream and a crack of black peppercorns with buttered toast on the side.

## 7 Spiced okra with yoghurt

This dish makes a great shared appetiser served with grilled flatbread, or a side to grilled lamb or prawns. Some people are put off by the slimy texture of okra, but it's barely noticeable when it's stir-fried. If the okra is left whole it's even less sticky. Either way, we love it.

**Serves 4 as a snack or a side**

2 tbsp grapeseed oil  
 1 tsp brown mustard seeds  
 1 tsp each cumin and coriander seeds, coarsely crushed  
 ½ tsp each ground turmeric and garam masala  
 1 tbsp finely grated ginger  
 600 gm okra, halved lengthways  
 180 gm natural yoghurt  
 ¼ cup coarsely chopped coriander

**1** Heat oil in a large deep frying pan over high heat. Add mustard seeds and stir until they pop (10-20 seconds), then add remaining spices and ginger, and cook until fragrant (1-2 minutes). Add okra and stir occasionally until starting to turn golden and tender (4-6 minutes). Season to taste and serve with yoghurt scattered with coriander.

## 8 Shakshuka

Baked eggs are equally as good for breakfast, lunch or dinner. This quick fried mixture of cumin, garlic, capsicum, onion and puréed tomatoes make an ideal spicy sauce to bake eggs in. The Persian feta is a must.

**Serves 4**

2 tbsp olive oil  
 ½ tsp cumin seeds, coarsely crushed  
 ¾ red capsicum, cored and diced  
 ½ Spanish onion, diced  
 1 garlic clove, crushed  
 250 gm tomato polpa  
 4 eggs  
 Persian feta, coarsely chopped coriander, thinly sliced pickled chillies, sumac and toasted flatbread, to serve

**1** Preheat oven to 230C. Heat oil in a 22cm frying pan over medium-high heat, add cumin and stir until fragrant (5 seconds). Add capsicum, onion and garlic and stir until softened and onion is translucent (4-6 minutes). Add tomato polpa, season to taste and bring to a simmer. Using a spoon and working quickly with an egg at a time, form 4 wells in the sauce spaced evenly around the pan and crack an egg into each, bring back to a simmer, then transfer pan to oven and bake until eggs are cooked to your liking (7-8 minutes for soft yolks). Scatter with feta, coriander, chilli and sumac to taste and serve with toast.

## 9 Caramelised pink grapefruit and vanilla ice-cream

If you don't have a blowtorch, caramelise the grapefruit under a hot grill. This supremely simple dish works well for brunch with yoghurt, or as a light dessert with ice-cream.

**Serves 4**

2 pink grapefruit, peeled and thinly sliced  
 20 gm panela sugar (see note)  
 Vanilla ice-cream or thick Greek-style yoghurt, to serve

**1** Arrange the grapefruit slices over an oven tray or heatproof platter. Scatter evenly with sugar and use a blowtorch to caramelise the sugar (1-2 minutes). Serve warm with ice-cream or yoghurt.

**Note** Panela sugar, an unrefined cane sugar, is available from select delicatessens. Otherwise substitute raw caster sugar or brown sugar. ☀



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# Polenta

Legions of northern Italians can't be wrong – this versatile cornmeal makes the ideal mainstay for so many meals.

**Polenta is great** comfort food and its neutral flavour makes it very versatile. The traditional way of cooking it is simply with water and salt, but a good homemade stock does it plenty of favours; it's also often served enriched with plenty of butter and cheese.

You don't necessarily need to stand sentry over it while it cooks. We whisk our polenta into boiling water, then reduce the heat to very low and stir it until it starts to thicken – anywhere from five to 20 minutes – then cover it and stir occasionally until it's done.

The amount of liquid you need depends on the coarseness and kind you're using, but it's roughly a litre to 200gm of coarse polenta. The cheap instant stuff has next to no flavour, so source a good Italian stoneground polenta, especially when polenta is the star of the dish. (We like Mulino Marino, imported by Lario International; lario.com.au.) As with wheat flour, polenta that is stone-milled contains a lot more of the oil of the grain, which shortens its shelf-life but gives it a vastly superior texture and flavour.

## Lemon polenta cake

Serves 8-10

Preheat oven to 160C. Soak 110gm **fine polenta** in 80ml boiling water in a heatproof bowl (10 minutes). Beat 200gm **softened butter** with 130gm **caster sugar** and 1 **tbsp honey** in an electric mixer until pale and fluffy. Beat in 3 **large eggs** one at a time. Stir in 90gm **self-raising flour**, 60ml **milk**, **grated rind of 1 lemon** and the polenta and a pinch salt. Tip into a paper-lined

20cm cake tin, smooth top and bake until golden and a skewer withdraws clean (50-55 minutes); cover cake with foil if it colours too quickly. Cool in tin, then turn out onto a wire rack. Mix 110gm **pure icing sugar** with 1½ **tbsp lemon juice**, drizzle onto cooled cake, grate **lemon rind** over and scatter with **chopped pistachios**.

## Polenta with sausage ragù

Serves 6

Sauté 80gm **diced mild pancetta** and ½ **diced onion** in a saucepan with 1 **tbsp olive oil** until tender (12-15 minutes). Add 600gm **chopped beef sausages** and brown (4-6 minutes). Add 1 **tbsp each rosemary** and **tomato paste** and stir briefly, then add 200ml **red wine**, 125ml **chicken stock** and simmer until sauce reduces and meat is cooked (5-7 minutes). Skim oil and keep warm. Cook 200gm **polenta** according to packet instructions, stir in 100gm **grated parmesan** and serve with ragù.

## Fried sage and Gorgonzola polenta

Serves 6 as an appetiser

Butter a 20cm-square baking dish. Cook 200gm **polenta** according to packet instructions. Stir in 100gm **grated parmesan**, 30gm **butter** and 1 **tbsp finely chopped sage**, season to taste and pour half into the dish. Dot with 100gm **Gorgonzola**, pour in

remaining polenta, cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight. Heat 2cm **vegetable oil** in a frying pan over high heat. Cut polenta into squares, ensuring Gorgonzola is in the centre of the squares, and fry until golden on both sides (2-3 minutes).

## Winter greens pie with a polenta crust

Serves 6

Combine 90gm **fine polenta** and 200ml **boiling water** in a heatproof bowl and soak (10 minutes). Process 250gm **self-raising flour** and 150gm **diced butter** in a food processor until combined. Mix in 1 **egg** and polenta, then transfer to a piece of baking paper, place another piece of baking paper on top and roll out to a large round to cover a large pie dish and refrigerate until firm (20 minutes). Preheat oven to 180C. Cook ½ **diced onion** in 1 **tbsp olive oil** in a saucepan over medium heat until softened. Add 1 bunch **chopped silverbeet** and 1 **grated garlic clove** and stir until wilted (2 minutes). Stir in 130gm **chopped preserved artichokes**, ¼ cup **chopped dill** and **finely grated rind of 1 lemon** and transfer to pie dish. Scatter with 200gm **feta**, top with pastry and bake until golden (30 minutes). ●

## HOT TIPS

+ Use a heavy-based pan for cooking polenta; even heat distribution lessens the chance of it catching.

+ Pour leftover polenta into a container and refrigerate it to set; the next day top it with your choice of cheese and bake it.

+ Make your own corn chips by rolling leftover soft polenta between two sheets of baking paper, then dry in the oven.

Lemon polenta cake



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# Lemon tart

How do you get that bright tangy custard and fine crisp base? Pastry chef **Catherine Adams** has the key.

**For me, a lemon tart** has to be all about the zing and tang of the lemons – that little shock you get when you take the first bite. I like to use Lisbon or Eureka lemons because they have high acidity levels. If you want a softer lemon flavour, try using Meyer lemons, which are a hybrid with lower acidity – you may need to adjust the sugar content accordingly. This recipe uses only the juice in the filling, but you can wash the lemons well, finely grate the rind and then rub it into the sugar for extra lemony flavour.

The filling is a custard of eggs, lemon juice, sugar and crème fraîche. I use whole eggs to give the finished tart a glassy or transparent look, and crème fraîche rather than cream because I like the flavour – it has the same fat percentage as pouring cream so you can substitute pouring or thickened cream if you prefer.

To make the custard, you need to mix the sugar and eggs, then let the mixture stand until the sugar dissolves completely – the mixture will be cloudy at first, then become glassy as the sugar dissolves. I use superfine caster sugar because it dissolves easily, and stir the mixture rather than whisk it to avoid creating air bubbles. Let it stand for around half an hour, stirring occasionally, to ensure the sugar dissolves properly, then stir in the lemon juice and crème fraîche. I add a little of the runny egg mixture to the crème fraîche first to thin it and to make sure there are no lumps. Transfer the mixture to a jug for easy pouring and when you're ready to fill the tart, skim the air bubbles from the surface.

For this tart, I use a sweet pastry with less butter than usual to make the pastry easier to handle. A rich shortcrust pastry would get fatty around the edges, and I prefer a pastry that doesn't compete with

the creamy filling – a pastry that's crisp and snappy. I add a little water to the dough to make it a bit elastic so it's easier to work with and you get a nice crisp finish.

Rest the pastry in the refrigerator after mixing it to give the flour time to hydrate and to relax the gluten; it also firms the butter, making the pastry easier to roll. Take it out of the fridge and let it sit at room temperature for 10 minutes before you start rolling so it's easier to manage – pastry can crumble and crack if it's too cold. Roll it out to a large round and trim some excess but leave it still larger than your tart tin so there's plenty to hang over the edges. The pastry needs to be docked or pricked to stop it puffing up during baking, but don't be too vigorous – you don't want to create large holes.

Line the tin with the pastry, then roll the trimmings into a ball and use it to push the pastry case neatly into the edges of the tin (fingers don't conform with the edges as well). I leave the pastry overhanging to make it easier to fill the tart to the top, and I trim the edges off after the tart's baked. This also prevents the filling from spilling between the pastry and the tin, which would make the tart stick.

For blind-baking, I use a double layer of foil, because it's durable and you can get it to fit neatly into the sides of the case. Dried chickpeas are the best baking weights – they're less messy than rice. The key to blind-baking is to cook the pastry thoroughly, until it's evenly golden brown because once you add the filling the pastry won't cook any further. I bake my pastry at a relatively low temperature to ensure it browns evenly from top to bottom.

When the tart case is cooked, remove it from the oven and use thin pieces of pastry trimmings to patch up any cracks, then brush it lightly with eggwhite to seal it further. Return it to the oven briefly, then allow it to cool completely to set the pastry.



Lemon tart



This helps to prevent it absorbing moisture from the filling.

Half-fill the tart with the custard, then transfer it to the centre rack of the oven before you fill it right to the top – this prevents spills and makes it easier to slide the tart into the oven. Bake it at a low temperature, checking and rotating it halfway through cooking to ensure it cooks evenly, until it's set but still has a bit of a wobble in the centre. The best way to check this is to nudge the pan gently.

Set the cooked tart aside for just five minutes to cool slightly, then trim the pastry edges with a knife. You need to do this while the tart is still warm, before the pastry firms, to prevent it from cracking. Cool the tart in the tin for 2 hours to make it more stable, then remove it (leaving it in the tin much longer will make the pastry soggy).

The tart is best eaten on the day it's made and shouldn't be refrigerated, so bake it early in the day and allow time for it to rest before serving.

**STEPS** Jug (with lemon juice) from Country Road. Baking tray, pastry brush, wooden Opinel knife and tart tin from Chefs' Warehouse. Food processor from KitchenAid. All other props stylist's own. Stockists p183. **TART** All props stylist's own.

### Lemon tart

*It's really important to seal the pastry well to prevent any seepage during cooking, and to trim the pastry soon after cooking. Let the tart cool in the tin before removing it, or it will crack.*

**Prep time 35 mins, cook 1½ hrs (plus resting, chilling)**

**Serves 12**

- 360 gm eggs (about 8)
  - 15 gm (about ½) egg yolk, white reserved for brushing
- 280 gm caster sugar
- 240 gm crème fraîche
- 200 ml lemon juice (4-5 lemons)
- Pastry**
- 250 gm plain flour
- 150 gm unsalted chilled butter, diced
- 30 gm pure icing sugar, sieved, plus extra (optional) for dusting
- Finely grated rind of 1 lemon
- 1 egg (55gm), lightly whisked

- 1 For pastry, process flour, butter, icing sugar and lemon rind in a food processor until coarse crumbs form.
- 2 Add egg and ½ tbsp water and pulse until pastry dough forms a ball.

- 1 For pastry, process flour, butter, icing sugar and lemon rind in a food processor until coarse crumbs form.
- 2 Add egg and ½ tbsp water and pulse until pastry dough forms a ball.

**3** Form pastry into a disc of about 14cm diameter, wrap in plastic wrap and chill for 30 minutes.

**4** Preheat oven to 175C. Roll pastry out on a lightly floured bench to a round 4mm thick and 35cm wide.

**5** Lightly prick pastry with a fork.

**6** Trim the pastry to a 35cm round and place in a 24cm-diameter, 3cm-deep fluted tart tin with a removable base, leaving pastry hanging over edges. Press pastry scraps into a ball and use this to press pastry case into the edges of the tin. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.

**7** Line pastry case with foil, fill with chickpeas or ceramic pie weights and blind-bake until pastry is cooked through (35 minutes). Remove chickpeas and foil, reduce oven to 150C and bake until pastry is golden brown and crisp (10-15 minutes).

**8** Patch any holes or cracks using small thin pieces of pastry. Lightly whisk eggwhite and brush sparingly over inside of tart case. Return to oven for 2 minutes, then set aside to cool.

**9** Leave oven at 150C. Whisk eggs and yolk lightly to break up. Add sugar and stir with a whisk until sugar starts to dissolve and mixture is glossy and syrup-like (4-5 minutes). Set aside, stirring occasionally, until sugar is completely dissolved (about 35 minutes). Whisk crème fraîche in a large bowl with a little of the egg mixture to just loosen. Add lemon juice to egg mixture, then add crème fraîche a little at a time. Set aside while pastry cools.

**10** When pastry is cooled, skim foam off the top of lemon mixture, then strain into a jug. Half-fill the tart case with lemon mixture, then place tart on an oven shelf, ensuring it's level. Fill to the rim with remaining filling (you may have a little left over). Bake until the tart is set but with a little wobble in the centre (about 30 minutes).

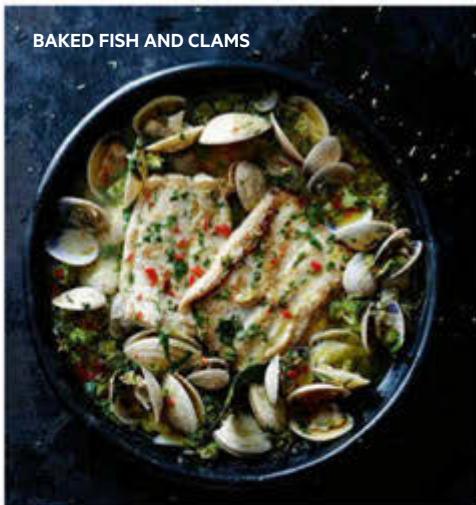
**11** Remove from oven, cool for 5 minutes, then trim overhanging crust.

**12** Cool tart in tin for 2 hours, then carefully remove from tin. Serve dusted with icing sugar.



# Baking power

**Pete Evans** bakes a couple of crowd-pleasers: a speedy and satisfying fish dish and a coconut-based crème.



## Baked fish and clams

"A side dish of cauliflower or broccoli 'rice' and roasted vegetables will be perfect for this dish," says Pete Evans.

**Prep time 10 mins, cook 15 mins**

**Serves 4**

- 80 ml (1/3 cup) melted coconut oil
- 2 skinless barramundi fillets (200gm each), or other white-fleshed fish such as snapper or blue-eye trevalla
- 4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 175 gm (1 bunch) broccolini, trimmed and coarsely chopped
- 1/4 cup finely chopped flat-leaf parsley
- 1-2 long red chillies, seeds removed, thinly sliced
- 3 anchovy fillets, finely chopped
- Finely grated rind and juice of 1 lemon
- 60 ml dry white wine
- 125 ml (1/2 cup) fish stock or chicken stock, preferably homemade, or water
- 25 clams (around 630gm), cleaned

- 1 Preheat oven to 180C. Heat half the coconut oil in a flameproof casserole over high heat. Season the fish and fry until golden (about 30 seconds each side). Remove fish from casserole and set aside.
- 2 Reduce heat to medium, add remaining coconut oil to casserole, then add garlic and fry until fragrant (about 30 seconds). Add broccolini, parsley, chilli, anchovies and lemon rind and fry until fragrant (30-40 seconds), then deglaze pan with wine, add fish stock and remove from the heat.

“This barramundi and clams is a dish I love to make when friends pop over. It's packed full of protein and cooked in coconut oil, which is a great source of good fats and caprylic acid. Fish stock adds so much flavour and is rich in minerals and collagen. Broccolini, meanwhile, is one of my favourite vegetables – it's a great source of antioxidants. My version of crème brûlée is a non-guilty pleasure made with coconut cream for essential fats and as an alternative to dairy, which many people have intolerance for. I also use organic eggs, which are a real powerhouse of protein. To finish I add a sprinkling of roasted nuts for extra toastiness, good fats and fibre, and spiced pears poached in red wine.”

- 3 Return fish to casserole, place in a single layer, scatter clams around fish, then cover with a lid and bake in the oven until clams open and fish is cooked through (10-15 minutes). Season to taste with lemon juice and serve.

- 2 Place coconut cream and vanilla bean and seeds in a saucepan over medium-high heat and bring to the boil, whisking continuously. Remove from heat and strain through a fine sieve.

- 3 Whisk yolks, coconut sugar, honey and gelatine in a bowl until sugar dissolves and mixture is thick and foamy (2-3 minutes). Gradually add hot cream, whisking continuously. Strain custard through a fine sieve, then pour into four 200ml ramekins and fill almost to the top. Place ramekins in a deep roasting pan lined with a tea towel and pour enough hot water into the pan to come halfway up the sides of the ramekins. Bake until just set, but still slightly wobbly in the centre (50 minutes to 1 hour). Remove ramekins from pan and cool briefly (5 minutes), then refrigerate to set (2-2½ hours).

- 4 Meanwhile, for poached pear, combine ingredients except pear and 300ml water in a small saucepan over a medium-high heat. Add pear and cover directly with a round of baking paper. Place a small plate on top to keep pear submerged and bring to a simmer and cook until pear is tender (15-18 minutes). Cool pear in liquid, then thinly slice before serving.

- 5 To serve, lightly and evenly dust tops of custard with coconut sugar and caramelise lightly with a blowtorch (be careful – sugar burns easily). Scatter with nutmeg and top with sliced poached pear and roasted almonds and pistachios.

**Note** Coconut sugar is available from select delicatessens. ●

## Crème brûlée

**Prep time 25 mins, cook 1 hr 5 mins**

**Makes 4**

- 30 gm sliced almonds
- 30 gm pistachio kernels
- 550 ml coconut cream
- 1 vanilla bean, split lengthways and seeds scraped
- 5 egg yolks
- 2 tbsp coconut sugar, plus extra for dusting (see note)
- 2 tbsp raw honey
- 1½ tsp powdered gelatine (such as Great Lakes)
- Ground nutmeg, to serve

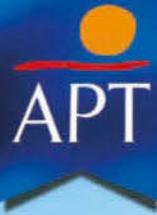
### Red wine-poached pear

- 200 ml dry red wine
- 30 gm (1/4 cup) coconut sugar (see note)
- 1 cinnamon quill
- 2 cardamom pods, crushed
- 1 star anise
- 1 pear, such as William, peeled, cored and quartered

- 1 Preheat oven to 140C. Roast nuts on a baking tray until golden (10 minutes). Set aside to cool, then coarsely chop pistachios and reserve both for serving.

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# The beet goes on

Silverbeet is ideal for boosting a gardener's confidence, writes **Mat Pember**, and with frequent harvesting it's the leafy green that keeps on giving.

**There comes a time** when we need to boost our battered confidence a bit. Often, a small win is all we need to get back into our stride and once again reach our own high standards. Fortunately for us edible gardeners, there's an easy-to-grow plant called silverbeet – the ultimate gardening rebound.

Silverbeet, commonly known outside Australia and New Zealand as chard, is a robust leafy green. If you grow the rainbow variety, its stalks are so colourful you'll wonder whether you've stepped out of your garden and into Chagall's studio. Although it's part of the beet family, silverbeet does not have an edible root bulb, or any root bulb for that matter. Very confusing, I know. Its other aliases include perpetual spinach, spinach beet, crab beet and – my personal favourite – mangold. No matter what you prefer to call it, this green tastes great.

Silverbeet can be planted year round, provided the environment isn't extremely hot or cold. This means it's a ready tenant whenever new garden real estate becomes available. At the Little Veggie Patch Co, however, during the hot months we like to use all our available space for summer vegetables, so silverbeet has become a de facto winter crop.

As with all edibles, soil and location are key. It should come as no surprise that silverbeet does best in nutrient-rich, well-draining, loamy soil. If you're tight on space, you can meet all these conditions by putting an individual plant in a 30-centimetre pot. When planting directly into the ground, mix in a bag of organic compost to give the seeds or seedlings an extra boost. What you put in your soil ultimately ends up in your food, so make sure you use the good stuff.

Silverbeet does best in full or partial sun, but can also cope with some pretty bleak spaces. Find

the best location possible and sow the seeds or plant seedlings 20 to 40 centimetres apart. If you live in a frosty climate, propagate the seedlings indoors and wait until they're about seven centimetres tall before transplanting them outside. The early days are critical, but once it's established, silverbeet is indestructible.

Water the seedlings every morning and after four weeks thin them to about half their original numbers. Each individual silverbeet seed will produce a few stalks, so choose the strongest seedlings and pluck out the others to give the survivors plenty of space to thrive. The plants also benefit from a monthly application of a liquid tonic such as seaweed extract to make them even hardier.

Start harvesting the leaves at around six weeks, or once they're about 30 centimetres long. The rule of thumb for leafy greens is to harvest leaves from the outside (leaving those closest to the centre of the plant) by snipping them near the base or peeling the leaf downward. This type of harvesting encourages further growth and you should get months or even a year of tasty greens from each plant. Be sure to harvest frequently, because the leaves can become quite tough as they age.

Think of silverbeet as you would spinach or kale and cook it accordingly. As a kid I overindulged (if you could call it indulgence) on silverbeet sautéed with olive oil, salt and garlic, and it turned into Popeye broth. I loved it until I hated it and consequently silverbeet took many years to make its way back into my heart. It is safe to say that we have rekindled our romance and I now recognise silverbeet for what it is: a healthful, tasty vegetable that grows like a weed.

## TIP OF THE MONTH: PERPETUAL HARVESTING

*In the patch we always try to remain sensible when harvesting – that is, we pick only what we need and in a way that's best for the plant. Sure, sometimes we get excited by the bounty on offer and pick an entire head of lettuce, which ends up sitting in the vegetable drawer, but usually we pick leaf by leaf. This is the idea behind perpetual harvesting.*

**TAKE A LEAF** All leafy greens, silverbeet included, are best picked leaf by leaf. Taking the outer, more mature leaves first frees up the plant's energy to let the next generation of food shine through. In this fashion, the plant will keep reproducing, and you'll have leafy greens on tap. So harvest prudently to make the most of your plant.

**ALL GOOD THINGS** Nothing lasts forever, and this is one of those false perpetuities – it eventually runs dry. After a prolonged harvesting period, the leaves will begin to turn bitter and there will come a time when you'll know that the final green leaf has been picked. Enjoy it while it lasts. ●

## WHAT TO PLANT

### TEMPERATE

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- BOK CHOY/PAK CHOI
- BROAD BEANS
- BROCCOLI
- CARROT
- CELERY
- CORIANDER
- FENNEL
- GARLIC (BULBS)
- HERBS
- (ALL EXCEPT BASIL)
- KALE
- LETTUCE
- PARSNIP
- PEAS
- RADISH
- ROCKET
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## VERDANT ISLE

Sri Lanka has been producing high-quality sugar since the 1840s. Sri Lankan Rapadura Sugar is sourced from the flourishing cane fields of the Uva province in the south-east of the country, just over 160km from the capital, Colombo.

The name rapadura is actually Portuguese for unrefined whole cane sugar.



## Fresh ginger rapadura cake

When baking with fresh ginger it's important to chop it finely rather than grating it to prevent excess juices seeping during cooking. Liquorice ice-cream makes a great accompaniment.

**Prep time 20 mins, cook 1 hr**

**Serves 8-10**

2 eggs

200 gm Sri Lankan Rapadura Sugar

250 ml (1 cup) grapeseed oil

130 gm (1 cup) Mexican Agave Sugar

50 gm Australian Muscovado Sugar

35 gm peeled young ginger, finely chopped

300 gm (2 cups) self-raising flour

Ice-cream, such as liquorice or vanilla, to serve

### Nashi-ginger caramel

150 gm French Caster Sugar

4 nashi, peeled, cored, diced

1 tbsp finely julienned ginger

**1** Preheat oven to 170C. Whisk eggs and rapadura sugar in an electric mixer until pale and thick, add oil and agave sugar, whisk to combine, then add muscovado, ginger, flour and 250ml warm water, and pour into a buttered 20cm x 20cm square cake tin lined with baking paper. Bake until cake springs back when lightly pressed (50 minutes to 1 hour).

**2** For nashi-ginger caramel, heat sugar in a frying pan over medium-high heat and cook, swirling pan occasionally, until a golden caramel forms (5-7 minutes). Add nashi and 1 tbsp water, and cook until nashi is tender, and water and juices are incorporated. Add ginger and stir until tender (2-4 minutes).

**3** Serve fresh ginger rapadura cake warm topped with nashi-ginger caramel and with ice-cream.



**SRI LANKAN RAPADURA SUGAR** is made from the evaporated juice of sugar cane. The molasses content provides the golden colour and delicate caramel flavour. It can be used in traditional sweets, such as sago pudding and urunda (sweet coconut balls), or in recipes that call for jaggery. Experiment with Sri Lankan Rapadura Sugar as a delicious substitute in recipes that normally call for white or brown sugar.



## ENTERTAIN

**1**

### BANQUETS

With its rich meld of Sinhalese, Indian, European and Tamil influences, Sri Lankan cuisine offers a plethora of rewarding ideas for entertaining in the home. Think colourful banquets comprising several curries, beds of steaming rice, tasty hoppers (rice-flour pancakes), and an alluring array of mouth-watering sweets.



**4**

### BEVERAGES

Temper the heat of Sri Lankan curries with a selection of light, sweet drinks, such as coconut juice or a faluda made from rose syrup. Or try some arrack distilled from the sap of unopened flowers of a coconut palm.



**2**

### SPICE ISLAND

Sri Lanka is renowned for its spices, so be sure to have a fresh supply of the favourites on hand to capture the local flavours.

Turmeric, cumin, coriander, curry leaves, paprika and cardamom pods are readily available at most Asian supermarkets.

**3**

### CURRY HEAVEN

The centrepiece of any Sri Lankan banquet is a flavoursome "main" curry of beef, chicken or seafood, such as maalu ambulata, a tamarind fish curry. Serve this on steamed rice with an assortment of vegetable curries, sambals, and hoppers made from rice flour and coconut milk.

**5**

### DECORATING

Be inspired by the colours and textures of the cuisine. Clay pots and coconut-shell ladles set among displays of pandanus leaves and bright tropical flowers pick up on the brilliant colours already on the table, such as lime green, curry yellow and paprika red, for a brilliant interior palette.



**6**

### DESSERTS

Coconut milk and Sri Lankan Rapadura Sugar are the stars here. Watalappan, a Sri Lankan coconut custard, is a favourite. Or try your hand at bibikkan, a sweet cake made with grated coconut. And, of course, there's always sago pudding.



**7**

### CEYLON TEA

Back when Sri Lanka was called Ceylon, the Brits kicked off the tea trade, bringing Ceylon tea to the world. This popular drop has a rich aroma and flavour with a hint of citrus. Enrich it (and coffee) with any of these delicious sugars.

**8**

### BEING THERE

If you're lucky enough to travel to Sri Lanka be sure to explore the regional flavours, such as ambul thiyal (sour fish curry), which hails from the island's south. The variations on traditional dishes across the country are an expression of the geographical diversity and rich cultural history.

### FARM TO TABLE

More than 800 local farmers manage the cultivation and harvesting of the sugar cane. The cut cane is pressed to extract the juice, which is then filtered and boiled. The resulting syrup is strained, then placed in an oven to achieve the right moisture level. The hardened syrup is put through a grinder to break it down to tiny particles, which are poured into 25kg bags for export. When the Rapadura Sugar arrives in Australia it is divided into 250g bags. The result is a high-quality sugar that will bring a touch of Sri Lanka to your cuisine.

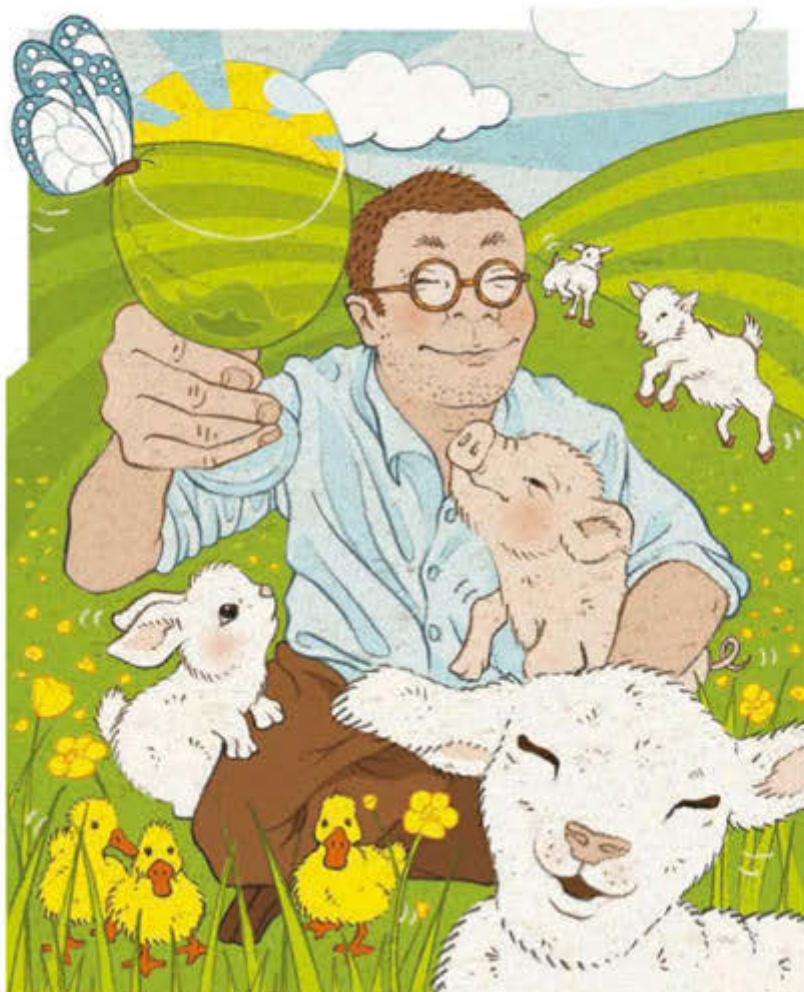
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# Bring on spring

July it may be, writes **Fergus Henderson**, but look ahead to spring – the light at the end of the winter tunnel.

**Australia, I gather**, is in the midst of winter, while here in London we are in summer. Spring has passed for us and it has been full of good things, so there is something for you to look forward to. I feel that this sort of anticipation is very important in the lean months so, to help you through the dark of winter, I thought I'd share with you a taste of what we've enjoyed in the north.

As spring began I spent a few days in Provence with Trevor Gulliver, my partner at St John, tasting wine. It was very good for the soul. Much more enjoyable than tasting a raft of wines straight from the barrel. It's wine that is meant to be drunk young, fresh and chirpy, and this quality rubs off on you, and you feel young fresh and chirpy yourself. What's not to like?

The first night was in Marseilles, which does not fail in being very port-like. So much so, in fact, we had to take refuge in our hotel as we were harangued by a horde of very old ladies of the night, who emerged out of the blue, heavily made-up and wearing fun-fur jackets and patent boots. Ah, France.

“Spring lamb plus Jersey royal potatoes, plus garden peas, plus mint – suddenly we’re speaking fluent lunch.”

The next day, having barely survived the attack of the pensioner seductresses, we drove up the coast to Cassis and before we knew it we were at a table on the beach, pastis in hand, mercifully unpursued by prostitutes or the elderly. All we had to worry about was making sure the bottles of rosé kept on coming.

Ah, the genius loci of it all, drinking the wine of the place in the place. Soupe de poisson was flying out of the kitchen. I tried to picture the fish stockpot, which must have been the size of a small swimming pool. That night the only thing that caused any ripples on the sea of calm was the father-and-son winemaker team we were dining with, who held their rather technical discussion in French, so I remained unaware of their discourse. It's murky waters when you can't speak the language and drink wine; making conversation is a great leveller.

Vineyards in this region seemed more human than the science labs of Bordeaux. One giant of a vigneron, for instance, put it to us that Trevor's son could marry his daughter. I tried to recall when I last heard of an arranged marriage. How lonely they must get at night in their vineyards! The next winemaker we went to see had a house pig. Sitting down you'd suddenly hear, "Oink oink!", and then there'd be a pig on the floor in front of you, rolling over to have his tummy rubbed.

Then there was the young enthusiast whose tasting room had a pinball machine blaring away in it and rather infuriating wobbly tables, which hung from the ceiling, giving you a very unsatisfactory place to rest your glass. He had a Tigger-like enthusiasm, though, that made it all easy to forgive.

The hub of life in Cassis was one rather unprepossessing bar – unprepossessing but still the place where all the vignerons met and drank with much laughter. And what's not to laugh about? The air is warm, the sea breeze gentle, and they all seem to enjoy their own wine. A ho-ho or two is much merited.

The springing of spring continued to be my theme even today back home as I headed off to Somerset to talk about lambs, which were popping out all over the place. When they emerge, the little lambs bounce in a most provocative way. It's as though they're saying, "Come on! Eat me!" Boing, boing! "Roast me!" Boing, boing! "Braise me!"

And leave it to good old nature to get the timing just right. Spring lamb plus Jersey royal potatoes, plus garden peas, plus mint – suddenly we're speaking fluent lunch. Not forgetting genius loci, a bottle or two would be a welcome addition to this seasonal celebration.

July it may be, but keep the faith – spring is just around the corner, and it's looking like a good one. ●



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**TEAM PLAYERS**

Left: Transformer trio  
Mark Price, chef Luke  
Florence and Laki  
Papadopoulos; a spelt  
and seed bun with  
beer-battered tofu.

# Virtue has its rewards

Fitzroy newcomer Transformer serves snappily dressed, inventive vegetarian food with cool confidence and unpretentious flair, writes **Michael Harden**.

## **There's nothing apologetic** about

Transformer. It's out-and-proud vegetarian, a restaurant that refuses the carnivore-pandering compromise of mock meat and meatless versions of meaty dishes. It's refreshingly devoid of mission statements and explanations. It neither worships tofu nor shies from it. Even the word "vegetarian" is MIA. Transformer just presents itself as what it is: a restaurant dishing up original, occasionally inventive and often very good food.

This is not to say it's immune to trend and fad. Its location, a carefully renovated former factory in a Fitzroy side street, gives that away from the get-go. Then there's the presence on the menu of the now apparently obligatory snack-in-a-bun. At Transformer it's a bao in which an excellent beer-battered square of tofu (chewiness! crunch!) hangs out with pickled cucumbers, Thai basil and a rich yolk-yellow vegan mayo flavoured with spicy gochujang. That's all stuffed into an impressive steamed house-made spelt and seed bun. The bun itself carries with it a slight hint of chilli heat from the shichimi togarashi that's been added to the dough. It's a disarming combination, a kind of lay-back-and-think-of-tofu moment that helps alleviate the suspicions some diners might have about eating dinner sans animal protein.

But there's plenty to soothe the jangled nerves of skittish non-vegetarians even before the bao lands.

There's the sophisticated fit-out, for one, combining a nightclub-like façade – strips of yellow LEDs, street art-inspired murals – with a charming airy interior, cleverly divided by panels of chicken wire that play trellis for lush plantings of devil's ivy and heartleaf philodendron. Amid all the greenery are handsome bare timber tables, banquets with upholstered seats, a mix of wicker and timber chairs, and spotlights suspended over diners by black powder-coated steel stems, all framed by distressed brick walls and a polished, terrazzo-like concrete floor.

In the centre of the space is a kind of timber-panelled pod housing the kitchen and bar. Out the back there's a charming courtyard. It's all very photogenic, comfortably fashionable and non-threateningly cool, with recycled materials and no visible vegetarian accent. Even better, for such a large and potentially arctic space, it's heated effectively in winter, inside and out.

Service, from a quip-ready team in leather-strapped aprons, matches the room's ambitions. The staff knows each dish thoroughly (though they're not as universally clued up when it comes to the wine side of the equation) and keep water glasses topped and food arriving at convenient intervals, all while maintaining non-irritating levels of enthusiasm. For those familiar with Transformer's much older sibling, the nearby Vegie Bar in Brunswick Street, this level of service and attention to detail might come as a surprise.>



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#### FASHION PLATES

Sprouted brown rice and beetroot risotto, Asian mushrooms and herbs.

Right: the former warehouse space.



Transformer's owners, Laki Papadopoulos and Mark Price, who also own Fitzroy's Rice Queen, opened Vegie Bar 27 years ago. It's been one of Brunswick Street's consistent performers, often jammed full of the vegetarian and vegan hordes that have always called this neck of the woods home (or at least their spiritual home). But the family resemblance of the well-worn and slightly ramshackle old canteen and this snappily dressed, distinctly restauranty newcomer begins and ends with the lack of meat and the liberal sprinkling of vegan options. Vegie Bar's faux chicken wrap and bean burrito aesthetic occupies a different demographic from that of Transformer's prettily plated concoctions.

Take the ricotta and rye gnocchi. Arrayed on a plate among piped peaks of pale-orange pumpkin mousse, dramatically dark pools of blueberry compote and a scattering of tiny leaves and flowers, it looks like a model for a pebble garden. It tastes at once robust, the pan-seared gnocchi glistening with browned butter, and sweetly delicate, the mousse mixed with crème fraîche and a little cinnamon. You might argue that the blueberries push the dish dangerously close to dessert territory, but there's no denying it's a looker.

A similar level of artiness characterises a dish of green curried polenta. The oblong of polenta, fried golden in the pan, subtly flavoured with Thai green curry, sits at the edge of a puddle of Thai pesto, all lime, coriander and peanuts. There are splodges of coconut cream and oyster mushrooms along with baby carrots, little balls of zucchini and roast cauliflower. The

presentation, like the gnocchi's, has a diorama quality. There's a satisfying unity to all the elements here. It's the sort of dish that makes you slow down to work out exactly how the flavours are being delivered.

Given this kind of cohesion and confidence, it's surprising to learn that chef Luke Florence is a relative newcomer to the profession. His only other paid cooking gig was a year at Vegie Bar while Transformer came together. He and Papadopoulos travelled to the US to see the state of vegetarian play there, and on their return put the Transformer menu together.

The lack of a longer restaurant CV could explain both the unexpected delights – unique, even – of the menu and also the lack of complexity in some of the dishes that can make them seem a little out of step with the glam surrounds. They're not bad dishes by any stretch – a refreshing salad that throws together cucumber, tahini, spiced labne, chickpeas, almonds and olives, a dish of nattily grill-seared pears teamed with Holy Goat La Luna goat's cheese and a hazelnut polenta "croûton" – but they do come across as more café than restaurant.

That's not the case with a quite brilliant dish based on king oyster mushrooms from the Mornington Peninsula. The mushrooms, grilled to order, are teamed with confit garlic, rings of smoked and seared shallot, porcini-flavoured salt and an excellent pine nut purée that adds an earthy element to the mix.

Then there's the flamboyantly colourful sprouted brown rice and beetroot risotto, topped with a sculptural flurry of Asian mushrooms, herbed chèvre and togarashi; or the probably-shouldn't-work-but-actually-now-you-come-to-taste-it combination of organic soba, smoked tofu, pickled ginger, pomegranate seeds, capers, mizuna and house-made wasabi cashews. It's an East meets West meets Middle East collision, tied together with a punchy, vibrant dressing of tamari infused with chilli, ginger and yuzu. It may



#### DOWNLOAD OR CONTACT

Scan this page with the free **viewwa** app to see a full menu from Transformer or to contact the restaurant.

**GREEN ZONE**

Chicken wire plays trellis for lush plantings. Right: chèvre cheesecake, pear sorbet, honey caramel.



sound like stoner vegetarian food, but it's a lot of fun to eat, particularly texturally. It's certainly memorable.

The wine list is less memorable. The single-page document makes a stab at joining the organic/natural-wine conversation (sometimes quite successfully, as with a Save Our Souls organic rosé blend of cabernet franc, merlot and sangiovese) without ever being fully engaged. The prices – like those of the food – are reasonable; everything bar the Gosset Champagne remains south of \$100. Reading the list, it's easy to conclude that it was assembled with more of an eye to cost and concision than to interest.

Those seeking a little boozy innovation should look at the cocktail list. Clever takes on classic drinks include the Aperol Dill Spritz, which riffs on the Italian classic, mixing Aperol, white wine, hibiscus rose bitters, soda, and dill salt to make a drink that's thirst-quenching with just the right levels of sweetness.

At the time of writing, the Transformer crew had yet to turn their minds to the sweet stuff in earnest and desserts were still coming from the Vegie Bar kitchen. The pick of the bunch, the one that shouldn't be voted off the island when the new desserts eventually arrive, is a deconstructed cheesecake. Chèvre is blended with crème fraîche and teamed with a good, well-balanced pear sorbet, a shard of filo pastry and honey caramel. Simple but sharp.

Transformer has the side-effect of making you feel slightly virtuous (do vegetarians experience that all the time? Perhaps that explains the smugness), but there are much better reasons for eating here. The room, the location and the cocktails help, but the food is sharp, good-looking and full of interesting flavour and texture combinations. It doesn't make you forget that you're not eating meat; better, it makes you not care. They're just putting good stuff on the plate. No apologies. ●

**Transformer**

**99 Rose St, Fitzroy,**  
**(03) 9419 2022,**  
**transformerfitzroy.com**

Licensed

Cards AE MC V EFT

Open Tue-Sun  
8.30am-10pm

Prices Entrées \$9-\$16,  
main courses \$15-\$19,  
desserts \$10-\$14

**Vegetarian** Everything

Noise Elevated

Wheelchair access Yes

**Plus** Feeling both sated  
and virtuous

**Minus** A slightly tedious  
wine list

**AND ALSO****Hello, Clarine**

The team from Belle's Hot Chicken has punched a doorway

into the shopfront next door and created **Bar Clarine**, a chic little wine bar with its own kitchen, menu and all-natural wine list. The menu changes regularly but always features charcuterie (perhaps pork and duck rillettes with pickles), a couple of hot dishes, such as ox tongue and tail, and sweet stuff like a pineapple upside-down cake. **Bar Clarine**, 150 Gertrude St, Fitzroy, (03) 9077 0788

**East end**

Opened by chef Thi Le, **Anchovy** is a clean-lined modern-Asian restaurant with a Vietnamese lean. Exciting snacks for sitting at the bar with a glass of wine from the tightly directed list include excellent garlic shoots tossed in a wok with spiced salt, and brilliant bánh pâté sô (little pies with lap cheong and black fungus), while for dinner there's raw beef with rice crackers and house-made rice cakes with green papaya, chilli soy and fried egg. **Anchovy**, 338 Bridge Rd, Richmond, (03) 9428 3526

**Hot to tratt**

The folks behind Dromana Estate's Terre restaurant have opened a second business, a classic trattoria in Flinders. **Cook & Norman Trattoria** is relaxed and comfortable, the ideal backdrop for excellent handmade pasta (spaghetti carbonara, gnocchi with braised lamb and cavolo nero), veal carpaccio with truffle mayonnaise or a solid tiramisù. There's a local and Italian wine list and dishes for the kids. **Cook & Norman Trattoria**, Shop 1, 52 Cook St, Flinders, (03) 5989 0119



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# Smoking gun

It's cooking with wood but not as we know it. At Firedoor, Lennox Hastie turns out food that surprises in its precision and subtlety, writes ***Pat Nourse***.

**Gather near, children,** and let me tell you of a time way back in the past when menus were just a list of the dishes on offer, possibly with the prices next to them. That was before the era of bills of fare loaded up with more credits than a Pixar movie (was the International in Darlinghurst in the '90s the first place to name-check the waiters' tie-bars?), back when "chef's philosophy" were two words floating free of each other in the ether, a gentle and innocent time when a mission statement wasn't something you'd expect to find in your dinner. (And let's not even get into, "Have you dined with us before?", the hospitality equivalent of a wet-fish handshake.) Those were the days.

Anyway, at Firedoor they don't muck around with any of that rot mercifully, but they have given the back of the menu over to a short dissertation on the 11 woods they burn in their kitchen. It's bracingly straight stuff for the most part: pecan is hard, burns hot and has a strong and distinctive sweet flavour. Grapevine shoots are ideal for fast fires to quickly cook smaller cuts of meat, while orange burns with a perfume that combines well with the richness of salmon or mussels. The description for hay ("though not a wood") details the fragrant qualities of coumarin, "a phytochemical with a vanilla-like flavour that naturally occurs in lavender, liquorice, strawberries, apricots, cherries, cinnamon and sweet clover", before going on to note that hay combusts readily and offers a taste that is a fine match for mackerel, sweetbreads and snails.

For the most part this isn't the sort of information you crib from a book or the internet. Or at least Lennox

Hastie didn't. This is knowledge he picked up and refined working over the coals for years at Asador Etxebarri, the fêted restaurant outside Bilbao in the Basque country that has over the past decade come to be a place of pilgrimage for anyone interested in the art of cooking with fire.

Hastie appears to really like doing things the hard way. Nothing about the axe hanging on the wall or the bandsaw behind the open kitchen's counter suggests he's interested in shortcuts, and everything about the meticulous way he moves around the grills, carefully raising and lowering them on pulleys, keeping the coals just so, suggests a chef in control. A chef in his element.

There's no gas line at Firedoor, his new Surry Hills restaurant, and anything that's cooked is cooked over coals. While the smoke in the air might put diners in mind of the burnt-onion-and-exploding-snag fun of the backyard barbie, there's nothing slapdash about this operation, and you get the impression that questions about beer-can chicken might lead all too quickly to an encounter with the axe and the bandsaw. Hastie's cooking is like nothing else in town.

While seafood of all stripes is a focus and vegetables get the rock-star treatment here, Firedoor may well make its reputation by redefining how a steak can and should be cooked. Hastie starts with O'Connor grass-fed Angus-Hereford cross, which he slices off the rack of ribs to order with said bandsaw. The meat has been dry-aged for a very long time. Our resident meat guru Anthony Puharich (who supplies Firedoor) says 30 or 40 days is usually considered the sweet spot,>

**MAN ON FIRE**  
Firedoor owner-chef  
Lennox Hastie;  
grilled leaves with  
guanciale and pecans.



**BLAZING A TRAIL**  
Below: Murray cod  
with Jerusalem  
artichoke and turnip.



where the complexity of the meat's flavour is well developed but the loss from dehydration and trim isn't too great. Hastie's beef has been hanging for 150 days, which goes some of the way to explaining why it was originally listed on the menu at "market price" (read: if you have to ask, you won't want to know).

Spend the money. They've put a price on it now; the last one I ordered was \$96 for half a kilo. The meat comes out nude on the plate, sliced, with the bone to the side. No one asks you how you want it cooked, but it ticks the boxes that every steak lover, from the well-done die-hards to the carve-off-a-chunk-and-I'll-ride-the-rest-home crowd, wants ticked: the absence of dryness, the presence of rich and complex flavour and texture. The steak isn't much more than a centimetre thick but it's juicy and densely flavoursome. The dark caramelisation on the outside is the thing that even our most vaunted steak specialists seldom nail. It's a bit like the great pâtissiers cooking caramel right to the very edge but stopping before it actually burns. There's no hint of the burnt or bitter here; just maximum beef, with more than a hint of gaminess from the dry-ageing.



## DOWNLOAD OR CONTACT

Scan this page with the free **viewa** app to see a full menu from Firedoor or to contact the restaurant.

Back at the other end of the menu, the bonito is barely cooked. Oily fish like this taste great with a bit of blackening on the grill, so it's interesting to see that Hastie hardly colours it. The slivers are more warmed in smoke in pans made of mesh than grilled in the traditional sense, then laid, fatty and pink, in a nest of pea flowers and pomelo. The smoke factor steps up with thick strips of bullhorn peppers, roasted to sweet softness over the grill, lolling on the plate red and happy with smoked Jersey milk curd and a tangle of red elk leaves. Hastie does vegetables with flair, grilling salad leaves (cos and treviso among them) enough to intensify their flavour without compromising their texture, tossing them together with hunks of pecan, and guanciale cut into fine and melting ribbons.

Firedoor doesn't go in much for decorative flourishes, and Hastie did much of the design and build himself, but it's not a no-frills establishment by any stretch. The slightly sunken aspect of the room, on a Surry Hills side-street, is appealing. There's plenty of timber in the room, fittingly, while the food comes out on attractively earthy stoneware. The luxury is in the details, whether it's the alarmingly sharp and heavy knives, designed by Hastie and handmade at Tharwa Valley Forge in the ACT, that come out with the steak, or the nutty, smoky bread baked here and proffered with a choice of smoked house-churned butter and oil from picual olives grown in Mudgee, "pressed three Wednesdays ago", according to restaurant manager Charles Casben.

Casben delivers the sort of service you'll get on a good day at Firedoor – thoroughly informed, professional in an unstuffy way, and able to pick up the ball and run with it. He offers the line about the oil with enough humour to say, "Yes, I know, this is a slightly ridiculous level of detail," but with enough commitment to make it seem worthwhile. When there are slips from his colleagues (the occasional note of intrusiveness or odd timing, say) it's usually more a matter of overeagerness than anything else.

They certainly know what they're pouring. The list, compiled by Master of Wine Ned Goodwin, trips lightly from great Sherries through a by-the-glass offering that shows off the "thread of smoky, mineral freshness" that guided many of Goodwin's choices. Casben pulls out a Latta sav blanc from Gisborne and a Fall from Grace arneis from McLaren Vale to pair with several of the first courses, mostly fish and vegetables. Both wines have seen some time on skins, and the rich sweet fat of the bonito, for one, finds plenty to play with in their grippy complexity.

Though it's home to a steak against which all others in the country may be judged – not to mention dry-aged lamb rump cap that, paired with cavolo nero and creamy borlotti beans, could be a benchmark for how to cook sheep properly – Firedoor is really all about the fruits of the sea. Hastie has spent years in a part of the world that is profoundly obsessed by seafood, which hasn't hurt his grasp of its essentials.

There's nothing radical about the combination of pipis, chilli and garlic. It's the meticulous execution that makes it sing, the shellfish full of juice but free of grit, the garlic and chilli sliced into translucent wafers that melt into the sauce, keeping the pipi flavour at the fore. A fillet of Murray cod is cooked with the kind of respect and sensitivity you'd expect of one of Neil Perry's chefs or Steve Hedges in Fish Face's prime. The proteins are barely set, with no sinewy uncooked bits in the centre, just flakes of fish that are almost jelly-like in texture. It's set on a Jerusalem artichoke purée and topped with rounds of radish and turnip, the flavour of the roots in harmony with the bottom-of-the-river earthiness of the fish. It's the same with a tranche of wild mulloway. Typically you'd see it pan-roasted, the chef basting it with hot butter and oil to crisp up the skin, but at Firedoor it's misted with oil from a spraygun and then cooked well above the coals in something a bit like a strainer. The result is light, savoury and clean, and puts the flavour of the fish ahead of the fat that it's cooked in.

All this smoke and precision creates interesting expectations for dessert. The presence of spaghetti squash in one dish seems promising (the innards of the scorched vegetable served with smoked-milk ice-cream), as does caramelised banana ice-cream in another (along with good crunchy shards of honeycomb and wedges of a water-based smoked chocolate ganache), but they never really threaten to compete with the quality of the dishes that precede them. Grilled green fig is more like it, sweet and rich against the clean, clear taste of the smoked-milk ice-cream with shavings of frozen, uncooked sablée pastry on top. The single most impressive sweet I've seen from this kitchen, though, is a simple-seeming bowl of cape gooseberries. They've been gently tossed in a pan over the embers – so gently that their paper coats are completely unscorched, but the berries are smoky and warm inside. This fella is, as the kids like to say, next level.



#### HOLY SMOKE

Right: banana ice-cream with smoked ganache and wild honeycomb.



And the wood? I'm not saying that you'll be leaping to your feet yelling, "Yes! Those olive wood embers were the perfect match for the zucchini" (or, conversely, "Ironbark with quail? Puh-leese"), and it's been mostly apple wood – "a Firedoor favourite for enhancing our seafood" – on the go when I've been in. But even if you can't pick the individual characteristics of each of them plate-by-plate, they're deployed with the kind of subtlety and understanding that yields consistently sublime results. Far from being rustic, fire in Lennox Hastie's hands becomes a precise tool for underlining the natural qualities of very good ingredients. It's no gimmick, and as a hook upon which to hang a restaurant you could do a lot worse.

If we were to psychoanalyse this particular moment in cuisine, we might be tempted to conclude that all this interest in sourcing ingredients and cooking them over fire is a reaction to the feeling that, as a society, we've lost touch with where our food comes from. Or maybe we're just getting sick of eating food cooked in plastic bags in a manner that privileges efficiency for the kitchen over quality on the plate. In any case, we're fortunate to make the acquaintance of a chef who not only refuses to compromise, but takes pleasure in doing so. Let's hear it for Firedoor. Doing things the hard way never tasted so good. ●

#### Firedoor

**23-33 Mary St, Surry Hills,**

**(02) 8204 0800,**

**firedoor.com.au**

**Licensed**

**Cards AE MC V EFT**

**Open** Lunch Fri noon-3pm;

dinner Tue-Sat

5.30pm-10.30pm

**Prices Entrées \$18-\$23,**

main courses \$22-\$96,

desserts \$16-\$17

**Vegetarian** Two entrées

**Noise** Noisy but not deafening

**Wheelchair access** Yes

**Minus** Not inexpensive

**Plus** Unique food, worth every penny

## AND ALSO

### Haven's gate

Firedoor might have one of the least inspiring names of any eatery to have opened in 2015, but the same can't be said of **Haven: Tailoring Coffee Joyously**. The new café's baristas (joyously) customise the sweetness and intensity of your java by tinkering with grind, temperature and other coffee minutiae. And they also do decent snacks. **Haven: Tailoring Coffee Joyously**, 30-34 Chalmers St, Surry Hills, (02) 9281 9300



### Besser in show

To complete this month's questionable-name theme, there's also **Besser**, a fun new venture from A Tavola's Eugenio Maiale, named for the '70s landscaping blocks. But what it lacks in, well, a good name, it more than makes up for in its risotto of the day (peas and haddock, perhaps, or crab), cooked for the first round of comers at seven each evening, and the friendly Italian likes of veal Milanese and "Mum's birthday sponge". **Besser**, shop 3, 355 Crown St, Surry Hills, (02) 9331 1611

### Out of the Moxhe

And while we're on the topic of tricky names, before you dismiss **Moxhe** let us just say that (a) it's pronounced "Mox" and (b) it's the name of chef David Coumont's hometown in Belgium. The food is modern European, taking in waffles (potato and beer waffles, to be exact, served with mussel mousse and endive) on the one hand, and ladyfinger bananas with curry-chocolate mousse and coriander caramel on the other. **Moxhe**, 65B Macpherson St, Bronte, (02) 8937 0886



# Purple reign

Malbec is on the rise, with local winemakers producing plush expressions of the elegant grape, writes **Max Allen**.

**This is a treat.** We're standing among the old malbec vines at the legendary Wendouree vineyard in the heart of South Australia's Clare Valley. We've walked down a few other rows and tasted a few different varieties of grape: liquorice-scented shiraz berries; sugar-bomb mataro berries. Now winemaker Tony Brady hands us a cluster of blue-black malbec jewels. I pop one in my mouth and chew.

And there it is: an explosion of perfume, violets and purple fruit, and a long tannic bear hug on my tongue.

If, like me, you're a fan of red wine made from malbec you'll know that Wendouree vineyard is Mecca, Lourdes and the MCG rolled into one: the oldest malbec vines here date back to 1898, and the wine is dense, elegant and intense – the essence of grape and place.

You'll also know that the grape – and wines like those from Wendouree – has been overlooked for years. Luckily, though, that's changing. Thanks to the increasing popularity of big, ballsy imported malbecs from Argentina, and a renewed focus on the grape among local producers in both traditional malbec strongholds such as Clare Valley and newer outposts such as Heathcote, the grape's enjoying a resurgence.

Wendouree's Tony Brady is philosophical: "Shiraz wasn't fashionable not that long ago. Now look at it. The best thing to do is to recognise what your vineyard does best and stick to it. And wait for the fashion to come round again."

My visit to Wendouree was one stop on a malbec pilgrimage I undertook last year with an old mate.

“And there it is: an explosion of perfume, violets and purple fruit, and a long tannic bear hug on my tongue.”

We had this crazy dream of making a small batch of malbec ourselves, so we went in search of Australia's best to convince someone to sell us some grapes. The project hasn't got off the ground (yet), but the vineyard tour did give me a great insight into the variety.

Apart from Clare Valley, the South Australian region most strongly associated with malbec is Langhorne Creek, on the shores of Lake Alexandrina, south of Adelaide. The grape has been grown here since the 1860s, famously at Bleasdale, where winemaker Paul Hotker took us through barrels of young wine from strikingly different vineyards, and opened bottles dating back to 1989.

Hotker is obsessed with the grape: he even travelled recently to Cahors, in south-west France, where malbec originated, to pick up tips on how to improve his wines. "I had some excellent discussions," he says. "Now everyone in the winery is rolling their eyes at my propositions for enhancing our wines." He doesn't need much help, really. The Bleasdale Generations Malbec in particular is already a gloriously sumptuous and chocolatey expression of the variety.

That's not to say improvements can't be made, of course; Hotker and fellow winemaker Rebecca Willson from nearby Bremerton Wines are involved in a trial with renowned viticulturist Libby Tassie, making small batches of experimental wines from young plantings of malbec – cuttings sourced from various vineyards around the country, including Wendouree, Bleasdale, Kalimna in the Barossa and one in Western Australia, where the variety flourishes in the Frankland River region. It'll be fascinating to see what this viticultural diversity can bring to the flavours and characters of Langhorne Creek malbec: each clone of malbec from each site behaves slightly differently and makes wines with different personalities.

"I love that all this focus on malbec is bringing attention to the region and its history," says Willson as she pours us a glass of her deliciously rich, plush Special Reserve, a superb example of the variety.

Heathcote seems to be leading the malbec renaissance in Victoria, thanks in part to extensive new planting at the Chalmers family vineyard: the fruit from this one site not only ends up as malbec under the Chalmers' own Arturo label, but is also sold to other producers such as Matchbox and Chapter.

Heathcote malbec is nothing new, though. David Anderson first planted some in his Wild Duck Creek Estate vineyard back in 1979. And he still loves it.

When we arrive at the winery, raw young Wild Duck Creek malbec is being pumped from one container to another, and the air is full of deep purple splashes. My mouth starts watering just from the smell.

"We're going to plant more malbec," says Anderson, as winemaker son Liam hands us glasses of Yellow Hammer Hill shiraz malbec. "It's a drop-dead beautiful grape." I take a sip and he's right: hedgerow blackberry fruit, sweet black composty soil, and a big black bear hug of tannin. ●

# TOP DROPS OF THE MONTH



1

## PINOT PERFECTION

2012 Stonier "Windmill" Pinot Noir, Mornington Peninsula, Vic, \$65

If you want to show someone that pinot doesn't need to be dark to be packed with flavour, pour a glass of this brick-red amalgam of sappy berries, dusty undergrowth and hedgerow succulence.

[stonier.com.au](http://stonier.com.au)

3



6

## DRINK NOW

2014 Harkham Aziza's Shiraz, Hunter Valley, NSW, \$30

Bottled without any added sulphur dioxide preservative, this is an exceptionally vivid expression of young Hunter Valley shiraz: bright black berries bounce merrily along your tongue leaving a trail of powdery tannin their wake. Yum.

[harkhamwine.com.au](http://harkhamwine.com.au)

8



## SO FRESH, SO CLEAN

2012 Muscadet Sèvre et Maine "Clisson", Domaine de la Pépière, France, \$42

It's hard to imagine a better wine for oysters. Imagine you've just swallowed a big fat, briny Sydney rock – now take a mouthful of this crisp, precise white and let its focused, lemon-juicy freshness clean your mouth, ready for another oyster.

[andrewguard.com.au](http://andrewguard.com.au)

2



## SHIMMERING CHENIN

2014 The Wanderer Chenin Blanc, Yarra Valley, Vic, \$25

Chenin blanc is such an underrated grape: in the right spot (such as the mature dry-grown vineyard where this wine is from) and in the right hands (Andrew Marks), it can make wonderfully savoury, spiced apple-scented white wine.

[wandererwines.com](http://wandererwines.com)

## PET NAT

2014 Sassafras Gamay Ancestral, Tumbarumba, NSW, \$24

Unusual début release for a new Canberra-based producer, made using grapes from the chilly high-country of Tumbarumba. Pale-pink gamay juice, ferment finished in the bottle results in a cloudy, slightly rustic, rosehippy sparkling rosé.

[sassafraswines.com.au](http://sassafraswines.com.au)

3

4



5



## ITALIAN CHIC

2014 Adelina Nebbiolo Rosé, Adelaide Hills, SA, \$40

Adelina is based in Clare and its main wines are shiraz and grenache, but I also like their Italian varietals – arneis and nebbiolo – from a vineyard in the Adelaide Hills, including this elegant, dry rosé.

[adelina.com.au](http://adelina.com.au)

7

## LUSCIOUS WHITE

2012 Grey Sands Pinot Gris, Tamar Valley, Tas, \$40

Few vineyards produce pinot gris in the fully ripe, luscious and textural style as consistently and deliciously as Rita and Bob Richter's Grey Sands vineyard near the Tamar River in Tassie. The perfect accompaniment to a chunky pork terrine.

[greysands.com.au](http://greysands.com.au)

10



## GREEK BEER

Nissos Pilsner, Tinos, Greece, \$9

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Q&A

NED BROOKS



## WINE INSIDER: NED BROOKS, MOON PARK, REDFERN

**What's on pour?** A small producer from South Australia called Mill About Vineyard's sémillon-zibibbo blend. **Bast match lately?** Sour beer; the acidity matches the lactic acid of all the fermented stuff.

**Winemakers to watch?** Owen Latta from Eastern Peake and Mike Bennie. **Biggest sommelier crush?** Ambrose Chiang at Momofuku Seiobo and Julia Sewell at Rockpool Bar and Grill, Sydney. **Wine regions you're excited about?** Central Victoria and Lodi in California. **What do you drink on days off?** Light beer and sour beer. **Your top winter drop?** Andréa Calek from the Ardèche – really fantastic red wine. Moon Park, 34 Redfern St, Redfern, NSW, (02) 9690 0111, [moon-park.com.au](http://moon-park.com.au) MAYA KERTHYASA



# Poll position

If you want to see countries at their most open, writes **AA Gill**, visit when they're changing governments – that's when they show their true colours.

**I'm writing this just** after our general election. I doubt you were interested at the time, and you're even less interested in it now. You did get a mention, though. The right-wing, swivel-eyed Kipper party wanted to bring in what they approvingly refer to as an Australian-style immigration system. I don't think they meant that we get overwhelmed by foreigners who give us incurable diseases, take away all our land, then make us dance round maypoles before they build shopping centres or open drama festivals.

As a travel writer, I'm fascinated by how odd other people's elections always seem, as opposed to the desperately infuriating and serious ones that we have at home. When you see that Belgium is having an election, you think, "Why? Why bother?

Don't change a thing. You're absolutely perfect at being Belgium the way you are. You've got the beer-and-chips thing down. Just don't muck about with the chocolates and the whacky facial hair."

Other people's elections always look like unnecessary vandalism. Why would you want to change Italy, or Tibet? Why does the Maldives need to cock it all up with politics?

Other people's politics are like other people's marriages – it's so obvious what needs doing, and mostly it's nothing. Our advice on other people's relationships and their physical instability is, "Just ignore the bad bits and learn to appreciate all the good things. You hang in there for the sake of the children."

And perhaps we should look at our own elections more as collective attempts to make

countries that we would like to visit. Political parties construct brochures for holiday destinations they want you to buy timeshares in. We are generally, as a rule of thumb, offered a choice between an historic theme-park and a discount Scandinavia, neither of which I actually want to live in (though I would occasionally like to visit both).

I'm always amazed at how little effect politics actually has on places. In the short term, of course, they can be huge. Civil wars, military putsches, riots – all have dramatic implications for nations, but they tend to be transient. The trauma subsides and heals over. Some of it remains as itches and aches on the nation's skin, but generally countries and people get on with being whatever it is they want to be despite the best and the worst that the politicians can bribe or threaten them with.

What is amazing is that countries continue to be so different. If you think of the world as a political colour-chart, we ought to be able to choose our country's look by deciding from a United Nations swatch ranging from North Korean pitch-black to Bhutanese happy-golden. Instead of putting an X by a single party, everyone should be sent the nation's interior-decorating scheme and each household would fill it in.

Should the kitchen economy be functional German tiles with a lot of green gloss or devil-may-care Italian terracotta? The living room: perhaps American stars and stripes, or Baltic communal living? Open-plan Swedish with a lot of candles, splinters and nudity? And the bedroom: social services – definitely not English chintz. I rather fancy a Samoan hammock and a moral free-for-all, but we might stretch to Russian mirror balls and a shot bar. Garden shed: defence – Costa Rican fire-brigade passivism or camp Austrian, with antlers, medals, furry hats and cakes?

We are too close to our own politics and marriages to see them as anything but deeply personal matters of life and love. But if you want to see countries at their most open and unselfconscious, visit them when they're



changing government. It's far more revealing than during their carnival or Holi.

The most terrifying I've come across was a revolution in Haiti; it was certainly more exciting than the Monegasque plebiscite, which was also the most depressing because it really did seem utterly irrelevant. Monaco doesn't want politics; it wants security and everything off the bone.

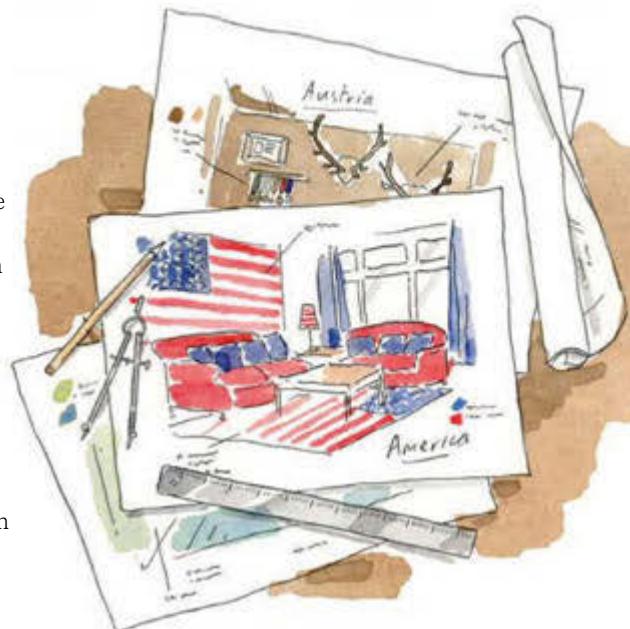
The most moving was oddly an American election. America does lots of things that are annoying and laughable, but it does politics very well. That's not to say that you like what they end up with, but the process and the commitment and the thoroughness of their politics is unsurpassed.

First, they spend an awful lot on them. Elections are the most expensive single civic thing most countries will ever do and no other country could afford an American election. They are blockbuster events, and they get an awful lot of bladder for their buck. They also take the drama of elections seriously, the narrative arc. They're interested in stories and it has to be well written, with big production values and celebrities and music.

They understand that politics is about the economy upfront, but underneath it's about sentiment, the thing that they love more than anything in America. Their cultural, spiritual and emotional gift to the world is the happy ending. For America, a big air-punching, welling-up finale isn't just a satisfying dénouement, it is a national rite – proof that this is indeed the best country in the world and that they are the chosen people.

Politicians have to win a party nomination and then a presidential election, and who that will be is the one that has constructed the best story and therefore deserves to get the happy ending.

The truth about American politics is that they actually make very little difference to the day-to-day running of America. The system is arranged specifically to stop anyone making too much of a difference to anything. But they just love the process, the fairy story, the excitement, the saga of it. They love the energy and the imagination that goes into an election. It's not so much about choosing a government as reinforcing the sense of belonging.



If you're thinking of making a trip to America to go see and have a bit of a wander, the travel agents and the tourist-mongers will tell you not to go next year during the election. But they're wrong. That's exactly when you should go. It's when you see an America and Americans at their very best and most honest.

All journeys need a story. An American democracy is one of the most interesting and entertaining available to the world. ●

ADVERTISING FEATURE

# French hot spot



## Divine dining French style

Blini with salmon make an elegant entrée or perfect canapés to serve with drinks. Tefal's Thermo-Spot™, the smart heat indicator, takes the guesswork out of cooking. When the spot turns red you know the pan is at the correct heat, so the batter hits it at the ideal time, ensuring the blini turn out golden and just right. Plus, the non-stick coating means you need little or no oil and cleaning up is a breeze. C'est parfait.

*Guillaume Brahimi*

Award-winning chef and Tefal ambassador, Guillaume Brahimi.



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The secret to my appetising entrée is prime produce, a touch of savoir faire and my trusty Tefal® non-stick pan.

### Potato blini with smoked salmon and crème fraîche

Prep 15 mins, cook 1 hr Makes 12

600 gm Desiree potatoes, scrubbed  
30 gm plain flour  
3 eggs  
2 egg yolks  
80 gm crème fraîche, plus extra to serve  
2 tbsp finely chopped chives, plus extra to serve  
250 gm smoked salmon

1 Preheat oven to 180°C. Place potatoes in oven and bake until tender when pierced with a sharp knife (45-60 minutes).

2 Halve potatoes, spoon fluffy insides from skins and

pass through a ricer or drum sieve into a bowl.

3 Mix in flour, then add eggs, yolks and crème fraîche and combine well. Add chives and season with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Allow mixture to rest for 1½ hours.

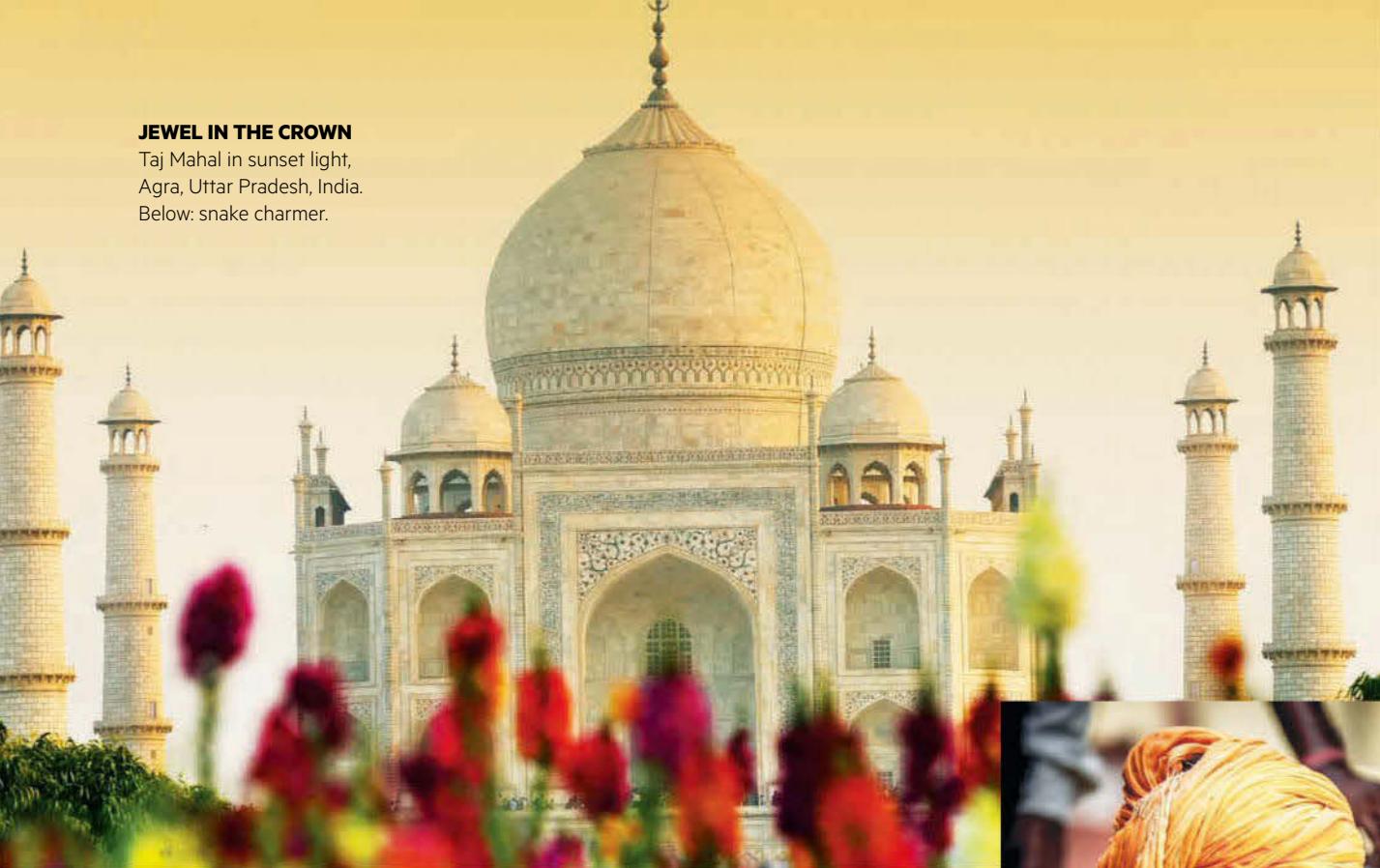
4 Place an 26cm Tefal frying pan on medium heat, add a little oil, then drop in tablespoonfuls of batter to form 5cm rounds and cook, flipping once, until golden on both sides.

5 To serve, top blini with smoked salmon, crème fraîche and chives.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THERMO-SPOT GO TO [TEFAL.COM.AU](http://TEFAL.COM.AU)

#### JEWEL IN THE CROWN

Taj Mahal in sunset light,  
Agra, Uttar Pradesh, India.  
Below: snake charmer.



# A passage to India

Experience the extraordinary subcontinent with an award-winning author who will take you on a literary tour of its wonders – an opportunity not to be missed.

Ever since Claire Scobie first set foot on the subcontinent nearly 20 years ago, she has been drawn back to this extraordinary land of contrasts and contradictions, palaces, princes and colour.

In January next year you have the opportunity to join her on an extraordinary literary journey through India. From beginning to end, India comes alive through its literature and at Asia's pre-eminent writers' fair, the Jaipur Literature Festival, you'll join audiences at Diggi Palace Hotel to be entertained by a galaxy of international and Indian authors.

Meet local writers and follow in the footsteps of famous novelists. From the memoirs of a Rajasthani princess to the trials of a middle-class Delhi family, from Salman Rushdie to *Shantaram* by Australian novelist Gregory David Roberts, India's unforgettable characters and vast historical canvas will surprise, enchant and intrigue. Sign up today to become part of this wondrous and ongoing story.



## INDIA & THE JAIPUR LITERATURE FESTIVAL WITH CLAIRE SCOBIE

### SATURDAY 16 JANUARY 2016: ARRIVE DELHI

Arrive in the Indian capital to a warm welcome and transfer to your historic hotel, The Imperial.

### SUNDAY 17 JANUARY 2016: DELHI

A local expert leads a stroll through Old Delhi, Chandni Chowk market, Jama Masjid, the biggest mosque in India, ending at the spice market. Dinner at the Imperial's Spice Route restaurant.

### MONDAY 18 JANUARY 2016: DELHI

Claire hosts a literary journey from past to present, starting with a visit to Humayan's Tomb brought to life in William Dalrymple's *The Last Mughal: The Fall of a Dynasty*, and taking in the Lodhi Gardens and the bookshops of Khan Market.

### TUESDAY 19 JANUARY 2016: DELHI - AGRA

Travel to Agra and take a guided tour of the vast Agra Fort with breathtaking views over the Yamuna River towards the mighty Taj Mahal. Finish the day in splendour at "the Taj" as the sun is setting.

### WEDNESDAY 20 JANUARY 2016: AGRA - JAIPUR

One last glimpse of the Taj Mahal at sunrise before driving to the 16th-century sandstone fortress of Fatehpur Sikri, a Moghul palace city. Stop for lunch and arrive at the pink city of Jaipur late afternoon.

### THURSDAY 21 & FRIDAY 22 JANUARY 2016: JAIPUR

Experience the Jaipur Literature Festival, attended by Nobel laureates and Man Booker prize winners to début novelists, at the beautiful Diggi Palace.

### SATURDAY 23 JANUARY 2016: JAIPUR

Visit the spectacular 500-year-old red sandstone and marble Amber Fort outside Jaipur, then head to the Dera Amer forest reserve for an elephant safari and Champagne brunch.

### SUNDAY 24 JANUARY 2016: JAIPUR - UDAIPUR

Journey by road to Udaipur famous for its beautiful lakes, hills and marble palaces.

### MONDAY 25 JANUARY 2016: UDAIPUR

Visit Udaipur's most important sites including the City Palace complex, the Sahelion-ki-Bari Gardens and the Crystal Gallery Museum, then enjoy an exclusive sunset cruise on Lake Pichola.

### TUESDAY 26 JANUARY 2016: UDAIPUR - MUMBAI

Fly to Mumbai and take a tour that includes the Mani Bhawan Museum showcasing the life of Mahatma Gandhi and the colourful dhobi ghats, Mumbai's unique outdoor laundry.

### WEDNESDAY 27 JANUARY 2016: MUMBAI

Claire Scobie takes you on a literary journey through this extraordinary city of contrasts that includes Chowpatty beach, brought to life in *The Moor's Last Sigh* by Salman Rushdie. A special reading over afternoon tea at the hotel, and the farewell dinner.

### THURSDAY 28 JANUARY 2016: DEPART MUMBAI

Transfer to the airport where your journey ends.

**TWIN SHARE PER PERSON: \$11,410;**

**SINGLE SUPPLEMENT: \$5,976**



#### FAR PAVILIONS

The Oberoi Udaivilas semi-private pools. Below: Taj Rambagh Palace Gardens.



#### YOUR HOST

Dr Claire Scobie is the award-winning author of *Last Seen in Lhasa* and *The Pagoda Tree*, chosen by *Good Reading* magazine as one of their Best Fiction Reads 2013. The *Sydney Morning Herald* described *The Pagoda Tree* as "a richly textured tale full of the sights, sounds and smells of India... a novel to be savoured". She has lived and worked as a journalist in the UK, India and now Sydney. Claire runs writing workshops across Australia and retreats in Italy. She has appeared on ABC TV's *First Tuesday Book Club* and her Tibet memoir won the 2007 Dolman Best Travel Book Award.

India's unforgettable characters and  
vast historical canvas will  
*surprise, enchant and intrigue.*



#### GUARANTEED DEPARTURE

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GUESTS REQUIRED FOR  
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# organic **soba**, serve hot or cold

*quick & Japan-easy*  
every night of the week!

3 x 90 g 270 g NET

Hakubaku  
made in Australia, the Japanese way

Prep Time 10 mins | Cook Time 8 mins

## Chicken with Soba Noodles & Garlic Sauce for 4

**Ingredients** 270 g Hakubaku Organic Soba Noodles (cooked as per pack, drained & cooled) 2 small Chicken breasts (trimmed & sliced thin) 2 Spring onions (thinly sliced, on angle) 1 tbsp Fresh ginger (grated) 2 tbsps Rice wine 2 tbsps Extra virgin olive oil 2 cloves garlic (crushed) 2 tbsps Dark soy 1 tsp Chilli oil 1 tbsp Mirin 1 tsp Sugar ½ cup Coriander sprigs (as garnish)

**Method** Combine the chicken, spring onions, ginger, rice wine & olive oil. Pre-heat a grill pan & grill chicken on both sides until fully cooked. Combine chicken & noodles in a bowl. Mix the garlic, soy, mirin, sugar & chilli oil. Pour over the noodles & chicken, toss & coat well. Garnish with coriander sprigs.



Hakubaku Organic Noodles are available at your local supermarket & at many organic & specialist Asian grocers.



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The Kokumotsu Company  
For more recipes visit [www.hakubaku.com](http://www.hakubaku.com)

# Kitchen special

Perhaps nowhere in the home do style and substance meet so winningly than here in our favourite room, the kitchen. Time to update yours? With expert tips, heavyweight appliances and covetable homewares, inspiration begins here.

STYLING VANESA AUSTIN PHOTOGRAPHY WILLIAM MEPPEM.  
FOR PRODUCT DETAILS SEE STOCKISTS P183.



# A day in the life

Whether it be breakfast or dinner (or any other meal in between), time in the kitchen is even more enjoyable when you surround yourself with beautiful pieces. Feast on these new-season products for cooking and dining with short-order recipes to match.

STYLING VANESSA AUSTIN PHOTOGRAPHY WILLIAM MEPPEM  
RECIPES EMMA KNOWLES FOOD STYLING JERRIE-JOY REDMAN-LLOYD



## BREAKFAST

With a boiled egg in a cute cup, slabs of warm toast and a minty juice served in sunny surrounds, you're set up for the day. Until lunch, anyway.

**1** "Origami" cement tiles, \$120 per square metre, from Teranova. **2** Simcox "Woven Ashen" wallpaper, \$351 per 3-metre panel, from Emily Ziz Style Studio. **3** Large enamel canister (with mint; comes with lid), \$29, from West Elm. **4** Mint plant, \$2.99, from Ikea. **5** Check napkins, \$6 each, from Williams-Sonoma. **6** Soborg chairs, \$1095 each, from Great Dane. **7** Vitamix Total Nutrition Centre, \$995, from Myer and David Jones. **8** "Cross-grid" highballs, \$3.95 each, from Freedom. **9** Iittala "Sarjaton" tray, \$129.95, from Design Mode International. **10** Pink-edged side plates, \$10 each, from The Bay Tree. **11** Ostron cutlery (with toast and in jar), \$6.99 for 12-piece set, from Ikea. **12** "Jett" espresso cup and saucer in jade, \$3.95, from Freedom. **13** Willow canister (under pendant light), \$14.59, from Freedom. **14** HK Living pendant light, \$299, from House of Orange. **15** Riki clock, \$155, from Ten Things.

**16** Smeg two-slice toaster, \$199, from Myer and David Jones. **17** Cornishware eggcup, \$19.95, from The Bay Tree. **18** Diamond butter dish, \$17.50, from The Bay Tree. **19** Menu grey stitches jar (with jam), \$69, from Design Mode International. **20** Laguiole pâté knife, \$17.50, from The Bay Tree. **21** Arzberg "Cucina" side plates (stacked), \$149.95 for set of 6, from The Bay Tree. **22** Charcoal plates, \$29.95 each, from Country Road. **23** Norm Architect DK wire bowl, \$85, from Top3 by Design. **24** Chilewich "Manhattan" square tray, \$125, from Top3 by Design. **25** Wooden eggcup, \$16, from Ten Things. **26** Remember "Marlene" jar (lid under egg cup), \$26, from Top3 by Design. **27** Pink-edged dinner plate, \$15, from The Bay Tree. **28** Pale blue enamel mug, \$8, from West Elm. **29** Danny pot (on floor), \$85, and succulent, \$35, from Shop U. Stockists p183.

### Soft-set grapefruit and vanilla jam

Makes about 1½ cups

> Peel and segment **2 ruby grapefruit** over a saucepan to catch any juice, squeeze in any juices from the membrane and add the segments. Add **350gm caster sugar, juice of 1 lemon and 1 vanilla bean, split and seeds scraped**. Bring to a simmer over medium heat, stir to dissolve sugar and cook until syrupy and jam reaches a soft-setting point (20-30 minutes; to test, spoon a little jam onto a chilled saucer and draw your finger through the mixture – it should leave a line that holds for a few seconds). Spoon into sterilised jars (see cook's notes p184), cool and refrigerate overnight to set. Serve on **thick-cut toast** spread with **ricotta**.

### Minty breakfast blend

Serves 4

> Process **½ chopped pineapple, 3 chopped Granny Smith apples, ½ cup each English spinach and mint, ½ cup plain yoghurt** and a **handful of ice cubes** in a blender until smooth. Add **honey** to taste if desired and serve in chilled glasses.>





## LUNCH

Soup makes a speedy winter lunch, especially when whipped to creamy perfection in the pot with a hand-held blender. Just add cheesy jaffles.

**1** "Kabineto" drawers, \$998, from Zaffero. **2** "Melrose" wine rack, \$79.95, from Nel Lusso. **3** Pineapple chopping board, \$55, from Have You Met Miss Jones. **4** Sheen square vase, \$35, from Have You Met Miss Jones. **5** HK Living green 3-litre bottle, \$29.95, from House of Orange. **6** "Kaico" enamelware pot, \$149, from Ginkgo Leaf. **7** "Dragon" soup ladle (in pot), \$6.99, from Ikea. **8** Napkin, \$34.95 for set of 4, from Aura by Tracie Ellis. **9** Smed brass stools, \$1195, from Great Dane. **10** White Brick01 wallpaper, \$123.50 per

lineal metre, from Emily Ziz Style Studio. **11** Small green "Nest" bowl, \$28, from Kaz Ceramics. **12** "Porcelain Dusk" bowls (with soup), \$38 each, from Studio Enti. **13** Electrolux Masterpiece Collection Immersion Blender, \$219, from Harvey Norman. **14** Cutipol copper dessertspoon, \$27, from Mud Australia. **15** Design Letters "M" jar, \$109.95, and "T" cup, \$36.95, from Design Mode International. **16** Oak salt dish, \$18, from Shelf Life. **17** "Entertain" serving board, \$17.80, from Freedom. **18** K Sabatier cook's knife with olive wood handle, \$125, from The Bay Tree. **19** Breville Original '74 jaffle maker, \$99.95, from Myer and David Jones. **20** "Abstract Check" bowls, \$29.95 each, from Domayne. **21** Pink Menu salt and pepper mill, \$129.95 for set of 2, from Design Mode International. **22** "Jett" bowls in Stone and Jade (stacked), \$5.95 each, from Freedom. **23** "Quinn" cereal bowl, \$12.95, from Country Road. **24** Iittala "Lempi Universal" glass, \$54.95 for set of 2, from Design Mode International.  
Stockists p183.

### Smoky potato soup

Serves 4-6

> Process 1 coarsely chopped leek, 1 coarsely chopped onion, 3 garlic cloves and 50ml olive oil in a food processor until finely chopped. Transfer to a large saucepan and sauté over medium-high heat until tender, then stir in 1 tsp each smoked paprika and hot paprika. Add 800gm diced floury potatoes to pan along with 750ml chicken stock, 3 thyme sprigs and a fresh bay leaf. Season to taste, bring to the simmer, cover and cook until potato breaks down and soup thickens (15-20 minutes). Discard thyme and bay leaf, add 150ml milk and bring to a simmer. Process with a hand-held blender until smooth. Add a splash of Sherry vinegar to taste and serve hot scattered with extra smoked paprika and thyme.

### Jamón and Manchego jaffle

Makes 4

> Mix 200gm finely grated Manchego and 120gm sour cream in a bowl and season to taste. Butter 8 soft white bread slices, turn half of the slices butter-side down on a piece of baking paper and spread thickly with Manchego mixture. Top with slices of jamón, then top with remaining bread slices, butter-side up. Toast in a jaffle maker and serve hot.>



## DINNER

We may love cooking, but we also love a dish we can leave to its own devices, like this Asian chicken classic, which cooks to juicy perfection in a slow-cooker.

**1** "Gerton" table top, \$179, from Ikea. **2** "São Tomé" curtain by Barbara Osorio, \$199 per lineal metre, from The Selvedge Group. **3** "Fog Linen" striped placemats, \$52 for set of 4, from Shelf Life. **4** Blue bowls (stacked), small one \$28, and medium one \$37, from Kaz Ceramics. **5** Seletti "Machine" dinner plates, \$198 for set of 3, from Chee Soon & Fitzgerald. **6** "Nolan" black cutlery, \$199 for set of 24, from Country Road. **7** "Flip Flop Slip" medium pink bowl, \$38, from The Fortynine Studio. **8** HK Living white vase, \$27.95, from House of Orange. **9** Hobstar glasses, \$24 for set of 4, from West Elm. **10** HK Living rectangular board, \$59, from House of Orange. **11** Platter (with greens), \$160, from Brooke Thorne. **12** "Flip Flop Slip" rectangular plate (with garnish), \$28, from The Fortynine Studio. **13** Vintage Orrefors wine glasses, \$40 each, from Chee Soon & Fitzgerald. **14** "Muuto Nerd"

dining chairs, \$599 each, from Urban Couture. **15** Wire house, \$55, from Terrace. **16** Crinkle pot, \$40, and succulent, \$35, from Terrace. **17** HK Living round board, \$59, from House of Orange. **18** Breville Multi Chef, \$129.95, from David Jones and Myer. **19** Kambrook Pressure Express, \$129.95, from David Jones. **20** Salt dish, \$28, from Kaz Ceramics. **21** "Swirl" herbal cup (in front of Breville), \$37, and wooden spoons, \$7 each, from Kaz Ceramics. **22** "In Between" table SK3 (front), \$2200, from Great Dane. **23** Kyo tongs, \$39.95, from Country Road. **24** "Raw" serving bowl, \$183, from Jardan. **25** "Masa" placemat, \$14.95, from Country Road.  
Stockists p183.

### Master stock chicken

Serves 4-6

> Combine 1 chicken (about 1.8kg), 3 litres chicken stock, 750ml Shaoxing wine, 500ml (2 cups) soy sauce, 300gm brown sugar, 150gm thickly sliced ginger, 8 coarsely chopped spring onions, 2 halved garlic heads, 6 pieces of mandarin rind, 6 cinnamon quills, 6 star anise and 2 halved small red chillies in a slow-cooker. Top up with extra stock or water if necessary so chicken is completely submerged. Set on low and cook for 5 hours. Carve chicken into pieces, place on top of steamed rice, ladle master stock over, scatter with extra sliced spring onion, juliened ginger and sliced red chilli and serve with steamed Asian greens.>





## DESSERT

Do we need to remind you how much more rewarding biscuits and ice-cream are when they're homemade? Add to that coffee extracted to order. Or even combine all three. It works for us.

**1** "Memory Mood Dim" tiles (on wall), \$79 per square metre, from Teranova.  
**2** Green "Claro" vessel, \$44.95, from Freedom.  
**3** Copper measuring cups, \$29, from West Elm.  
**4** Cuisinart 2-litre ice-cream maker, \$179, from Peter's of Kensington.  
**5** "Twinkle" lights, \$19.95, from Typo.  
**6** Celadon-style bowl (with ice-cream), \$65, from MH Ceramics.  
**7** Cuisena ice-cream scoop, \$6.75, from The Bay Tree.  
**8** By Lassen storage box, \$139, from Urban Couture.  
**9** littala "Kartio" glasses (stacked), \$30.95 for set of 2, from Design Mode International.  
**10** Rock "Hestelvia Stackable" 280ml

glasses (with ice-cream), \$2.50 each, from The Bay Tree.  
**11** Cutipol 24-carat gold and black resin coffee spoon, \$14, from Francalia.  
**12** Coasters, \$35 for set of 4, from Shop U.  
**13** Marble Basics board, \$75, from The DEA Store.  
**14** Handmade small beakers, \$28 each, and jug, \$60, from Brooke Thorn.  
**15** Glass jar (with biscuits), \$25, from Shelf Life.  
**16** KitchenAid KSM150 Artisan stand mixer, \$779.  
**17** Glass mug, \$12.75, from The Bay Tree.  
**18** Geometric trinket dish, \$35, from Shop U.  
**19** Cutipol white resin and stainless steel teaspoon, \$10, from Francalia.  
**20** "Tam" pink platter, \$19.95, from Country Road.  
**21** "Swirl"

cheese platter with leather strap, \$99, from Kaz Ceramics.  
**22** Nespresso Breville Inissia, \$249, and Nespresso Aeroccino3 milk-frother, \$99, from Nespresso boutiques.  
**23** "Porcelain Dusk" mug (with Nespresso machine), \$35, from Studio Enti.  
**24** littala Tapio Wirkkala Anniversary bottle in Moss Green, \$520, from Design Mode International.  
**25** Green "Tutto" towel, \$32, from Hale Mercantile Co.  
**26** Brass wall hook, \$29, from Shop U.  
**27** Harmony linen napkins, \$11 each, from Francalia.  
**28** Menu candle holder, \$149, from Urban Couture.  
Stockists p183.

### Spiced brown sugar biscuits

Makes about 15

> Preheat oven to 180C and line an oven tray with baking paper. Beat **160gm softened butter**, **70gm brown sugar** and **70gm raw caster sugar** in an electric mixer until pale. Beat in **2 egg yolks**, one at a time, mixing well between additions. Scrape down sides of bowl, then stir in **250gm plain flour**, **1 tsp ground cinnamon**, **1 tsp mixed spice**, **½ tsp grated nutmeg** and a **good pinch of salt**. Form heaped tablespoons of mixture into balls, roll balls in **raw caster sugar**, place on prepared tray and press to slightly flatten. Bake until biscuit edges are golden (8-10 minutes). Serve warm or cool. Biscuits will keep stored in an airtight container for 3 days.



### Chocolate ice-cream

Makes about 1 litre of ice-cream

> Bring 600ml milk and 200ml *pouring cream* to the simmer in a saucepan over medium heat. Whisk 4 egg yolks and 140gm raw caster sugar in an electric mixer until thick and pale. Add cream mixture, whisking continuously, then return to pan. Stir continuously until mixture thickly coats a spoon (5-6 minutes), then strain into a bowl. Add 250gm *finely chopped dark chocolate*, stand to melt (5 minutes), then whisk to combine. Refrigerate to chill, then churn and freeze in an ice-cream machine. Scoop ice-cream into a glass and pour *a shot of espresso* over to serve. ●



## KITCHEN SPECIAL

# Home truths

To take the guesswork out of your next kitchen renovation, **Maya Kerthyasa** asked nine designers and architects for their top tips on form and function.

## What should you never skimp on when you're designing or renovating a kitchen?

### ADRIAN AMORE

*Adrian Amore Architects*

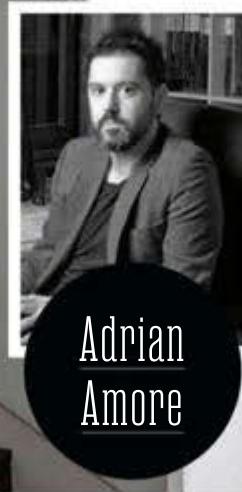
Getting the bones right is critical and planning a kitchen so that it works ergonomically is one of the most important considerations. A beautiful and practical work surface is also important. I'm drawn to surfaces that wear well and develop character as they get older; stainless steel and honed Carrara marble are favourites.

A quiet extraction fan is also important. Most kitchens now tend to be open and connected to living spaces, and there's nothing worse than a fan that's so noisy it compromises the enjoyment and use of the other spaces.

### ANNA DUTTON

*Bower Architecture*

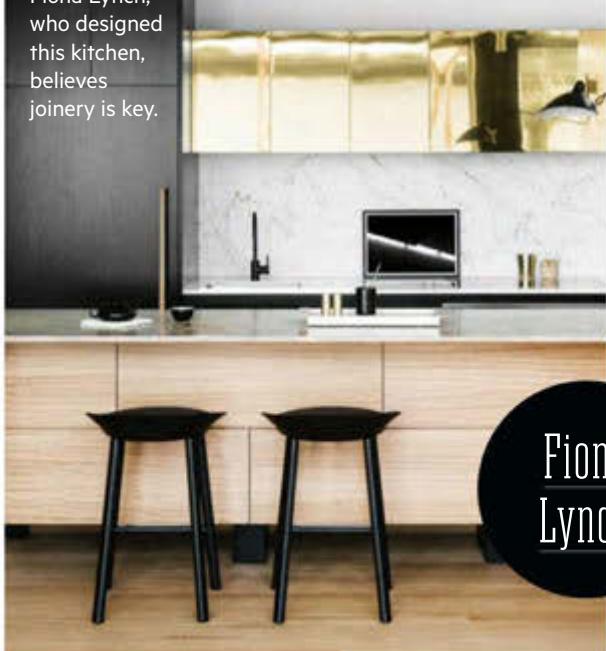
First, engage an architect or interior designer to ensure that your kitchen will be beautiful as well as functional and timeless. Quality benchtop surfaces are important; we make sure that clients have a durable bench area that includes the cooktop and main sink finished in a robust surface (stainless steel, solid surface or quartz) and then include a bench area finished in a luxurious natural stone like honed marble to become a focus of the space. Abundant natural light is also important – if you are renovating consider adding a skylight or a window.



Adrian  
Amore

### KITCHEN CABINET

Fiona Lynch, who designed this kitchen, believes joinery is key.



Fiona  
Lynch

### SARAH DAVISON

*Sarah Davison*

*Interior Design*  
Invest in big benchtops in a lovely, tactile material and great lighting.

### NICK TOBIAS

*Tobias Partners*

Bench depth and quality appliances are important. Of course, the cabinetry must be a star.

### CAROLE WHITING

*Whiting Architects*

Good appliances. After all, that's what the kitchen is



*“Getting the bones right is critical and planning a kitchen so that it works ergonomically is important.”*

all about – cooking and food preparation. Many appliances can be integrated into the design now and sit well aesthetically within the scheme, instead of fighting them. If you invest in quality appliances they'll go the distance.

### SCOTT WESTON

*Scott Weston*

*Architecture Design*  
Kitchen joinery and the quality of the internal carcasses are key because they need to stand the test of time. We steer away from cheap melamine and specify hard-wearing laminates.

### FIONA LYNCH

*Fiona Lynch*

*Interior Design*  
It's important to appoint a good joiner or cabinet-maker – the quality of your cabinetry all depends on the execution of the finer

details designed by your architect or interior designer. Invest in decent fixtures such as tapware because they get used on a daily basis and are the first things to become faulty.

### JUSTINE HUGH-JONES

*Justine Hugh-Jones Design*

Take your time when planning a kitchen and don't rush the design. It's one of the most important and expensive spaces in the house. Engage a professional experienced in designing and really think through how you live in and use a kitchen. Never skimp on quality materials; consider what the wow factor will be. Is it a great island that serves as both a prep and entertaining area that connects the living space to the kitchen? Then invest in a gorgeous stone and keep the cabinetry simple and subdued.

### WHITE HEAT

The warehouse conversion by Adrian Amore that houses this kitchen won the Residential Design Award in the 2014 Australian Interior Design Awards.



#### OPEN TO VIEW

Justine Hugh-Jones won Best Kitchen Design at this year's Belle Coco Republic Interior Design Awards with this design.

Justine  
Hugh-Jones



**What about the flip side? What things do people spend tons of money on that don't make much difference to the finished kitchen?**

#### JUSTINE HUGH-JONES

Too many appliances and gadgets for the space and huge amounts of storage. If you have too much storage it just gets filled with junk. My pet hate is to have appliances like ovens on show high in the wall when they're facing into living spaces. Ergonomically, it's great to have ovens up high so you don't have to bend down but I find it ugly as it ruins the line of symmetry of the cabinetry. A similar designer pet hate is a visible kitchen exhaust fan. It's not attractive and shouldn't be centrestage.

#### ADRIAN AMORE

Built-in items which people think they will use regularly simply because they have them. It's important to think about the way you use a kitchen on a day-to-day basis. If you only deep-fry once a year, then there's no

point installing a deep fryer. The same goes for steamers.

#### ANNA DUTTON

Going for size over function. Very large kitchens can push costs higher and not necessarily improve functionality. Smaller kitchens can be more efficient. Very high ceilings in a kitchen space add cost and create unusable areas; very high cupboards are useless and tops of cupboards are dust traps.

#### SARAH DAVISON

Some imported fridges these days cost as much as a car. A well-priced local fridge, such as Fisher & Paykel, does a good job and can be integrated with joinery.

#### NICK TOBIAS

Built-in gadgets. I see too many kitchens where a lot of money has been spent



Sarah  
Davison

on new appliances that promise to make cooking faster/easier/healthier or whatever. Over the years I've seen people spend lots of money buying these things, butcher the aesthetics and sometimes function of their kitchen to fit them in and I go back a year later and they're not being used. The better investment is to buy the best cooktop, oven and fridge – the fundamentals.

#### CAROLE WHITING

Complex joinery interior fittings – they're never seen, don't contribute

#### SMART MOVES

Sarah Davison's work on this house saw her short-listed in last year's Belle Coco Republic Interior Design Awards.

*"We've designed a few black kitchens lately, which sound scary but they're very chic."*

that much to the overall scheme, and that money can always be spent in other ways where it will make more of an impact.

#### SCOTT WESTON

Sometimes I inwardly roll my eyes as to why three ovens are needed, sparkling water on a whim, and whizz-bang appliances. In the end all you need is an oven, cooktop and a few other essentials to produce beautiful food.

#### GEORGE LIVISSIANIS

The finishes – it needs to be finished beautifully, but

I'd rather spend the money on the detailing of the joinery rather than expensive materials.

#### FIONA LYNCH

There are ways of designing an attractive kitchen without having expensive materials en masse. You can have impact by using materials such as stone, brass or mirror in a clever way. Cabinetry can be expensive and often hides beautiful crockery or items that you love. There are off-the-shelf storage solutions which are inexpensive.>

## KITCHEN SPECIAL

Carole Whiting



*"Kitchens look less and less like kitchens, with integrated dining and living areas and concealed preparation and cooking areas."*

### What's the best trend you're seeing in kitchens?

#### ANNA DUTTON

In family homes, there is a growing movement to integrate a home administration desk. Kitchens are often a hub of activity and it's logical to include a space for, say, a family computer and storage for the paperwork which comes with running a

household. We make these hidden from view when required with concealed doors or screens. Kitchens that occupy their own space rather than being in an open-plan area are becoming more popular. The ability to separate the kitchen from living areas isolates noise and mess.

#### CAROLE WHITING

We aim to create spaces that are timeless, not trend-driven. Our kitchens tend to look less and less like kitchens with integrated dining and living areas and concealed preparation and cooking areas.

#### ADRIAN AMORE

Full-surface induction cooktops which allow you to place your pots anywhere on the surface.

#### SARAH DAVISON

Kitchens are becoming more low-key and honest in their designs. Appliances and work areas are celebrated now, rather than concealed. We seem to be taking a turn towards visually softer, natural materials with patina. Wood, stone, concrete and steel are some of my favourites because they are timeless and age well. I'm also noticing a trend towards darker colour schemes. We've designed a few black kitchens lately, which sound scary but they are very chic, and really set off the depth of colour in food and people.

#### SCOTT WESTON

As kitchens are one of the most expensive items to refurbish we don't design trend-driven solutions. What we are seeing is more clients building additional

#### TIMELESS

Carole Whiting describes her designs as not "trend-driven".



**HIDDEN ASSETS**  
This Scott Weston design won Laminex Project of the year this March.



Scott Weston



spaces we term "magician boxes" that are multi-sided bespoke joinery boxes. They cleverly conceal additional pantry items, appliances, laundry and wine rooms, thereby de-cluttering the kitchen but providing functional back-up.

#### GEORGE LIVISSIANIS

I think kitchens are becoming beautiful pieces of furniture, especially in an open-plan format where they are often exposed to living/lounge/dining spaces.

#### FIONA LYNCH

Kitchens are starting to feel less zoned and traditional and more open and modular to the adjacent living and dining areas. This is a response to more spatial constraints and a more informal way of living.

## Is anything guaranteed to make the build or renovation take longer than it should?

### ANNA DUTTON

Not thinking through the design and brief before construction commences. Designing or adding to the brief while the project is on site drags the project out. I'd also recommend not doing the kitchen renovation around Christmas: things get crazy in the building industry around the end of the year.

### ADRIAN AMORE

Selecting imported finishes with long lead times. You need to get in early when selecting finishes – some can take up to 12 to 14 weeks if they are imported. If you select a finish which is out of stock, and you have your heart set on it, you may be in for a protracted build time.

### SARAH DAVISON

To not have a clear design resolved, and all appliances and materials ordered before starting construction is a sure-fire way to prolong the agony of renovations.



### NICK TOBIAS

Indecision and vacillation. Look at your considerations to form the brief, but do it with an open mind to change – there are always new and interesting things developing. Do your homework, visit appliance retailers and get a good understanding of what's on offer. Go to kitchen shops to see how they

deal with storage solutions, then brief and keep the changes limited.

### CAROLE WHITING

Interventionist clients. There has to be a solid foundation of trust between the designer and the client. The best outcomes are achieved when the client trusts the designer and stays the path. The project will have a more cohesive result. If the brief is clear, all the work is done in the design



George  
Livissianis

**COUNTER BALANCE**  
Kitchens are becoming like beautiful pieces of furniture, says George Livissianis.



### GUIDING LIGHT

Take the opportunity to add more natural light, says Anna Dutton. Below: Jade Vidal, Chema Bould and Anna Dutton of Bower Architecture.



Bower  
Architecture

phase and signed off, there shouldn't be delays.

Select the appliances, fixtures and fittings early on.

### SCOTT WESTON

We try to limit the unknowns by holding inspections with the builder before work commences to investigate sub-floor conditions, existing concealed plumbing ducts and structural framing. That way these unknown costs can be identified so there are no nasty surprises during the refurbishment works.

**FIONA LYNCH**  
If there are items coming in from Europe such as natural stones and appliances there will be long lead times so it's best to place orders on these as soon as the decision is locked in to avoid delays in the building process.

### JUSTINE HUGH-JONES

Bad planning – not having a sound set of well-drawn-up plans and starting the renovation before all the appliances and finishes have been specified and delivery times checked. >

### CLEAN CUT

Bower Architecture's Hover House, a winner in the 2014 Victorian Architecture Awards.



## What's the most common request from clients?

### NICK TOBIAS

The island bench would have to be the most popular request. It allows whoever is in the kitchen to face outwards towards family and friends and feel part of the action. The island bench is also an object people tend to feel comfortable communing around.

### ADRIAN AMORE

More storage. People are paranoid about not being able to find homes for all their bits and bobs. It's important to have different levels of storage and utilise every spare centimetre of your kitchen. Items that are regularly used need to be easily accessible; use more remote, difficult-to-access areas for bulky items and items that only get used occasionally.

### ANNA DUTTON

A butler's pantry is almost always high on our clients' wish lists. They are

fabulous for storing kitchen appliances, food and keeping some of the messier tasks out of site of the main kitchen area.

### SARAH DAVISON

A lot of clients want a kitchen that accommodates different functions and people at once. Someone cooking, children doing homework, someone else hanging out and having a cup of tea – kitchens are the social hub of the home.

### CAROLE WHITING

Can we design them a kitchen that is both practical and beautiful? In the Righi kitchen (see page 90) the cooking and preparation area is hidden from view but the cook can still be present and part of the conversation. The timber wall opposite is storage from floor to ceiling and has appliances, plates and platters and myriads of other stuff out of sight, yet easy to access.

### GEORGE LIVISSIANIS

The flow of the kitchen – function is paramount to most people.

### FIONA LYNCH

Clients are always keen to have plenty of storage and, understandably, a practical kitchen to suit the way they live. We invest a lot of time in the briefing stage to ensure the kitchen is customised to the client's needs.

### Nick Tobias

*"The island bench is an object people tend to feel comfortable communing around."*



### JUSTINE HUGH-JONES

The inclusion of a kitchen island. It's great to have a multi-functional space that connects the living area to the kitchen and can also serve as a prep bench, dining table, and homework and entertaining space. Consider the scale of the island when designing the kitchen, though – an enormous island is a flat empty

countertop which needs some interest and beauty. How are you going to style the island? Consider a beautiful stone with movement and pattern, or have an area that would be styled with a lamp or a large container of beautiful leaves. Islands can too easily become dumping grounds with day-to-day living, especially for families.



FOOD IS ART. RESPECT IT.

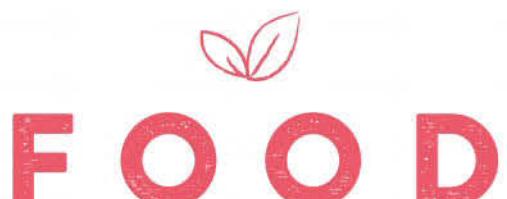


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# Dream themes

Interiors stylist **Steve Cordony** delivers the hottest kitchen trends, from punchy colour bursts to slick monochrome and Scandi chic.



1



11

10



2

## PARISIAN LUXE

*Touches of marble and brass in a monochrome palette make for a chic juxtaposition of raw and polished finishes.*



4



5



6



8



9

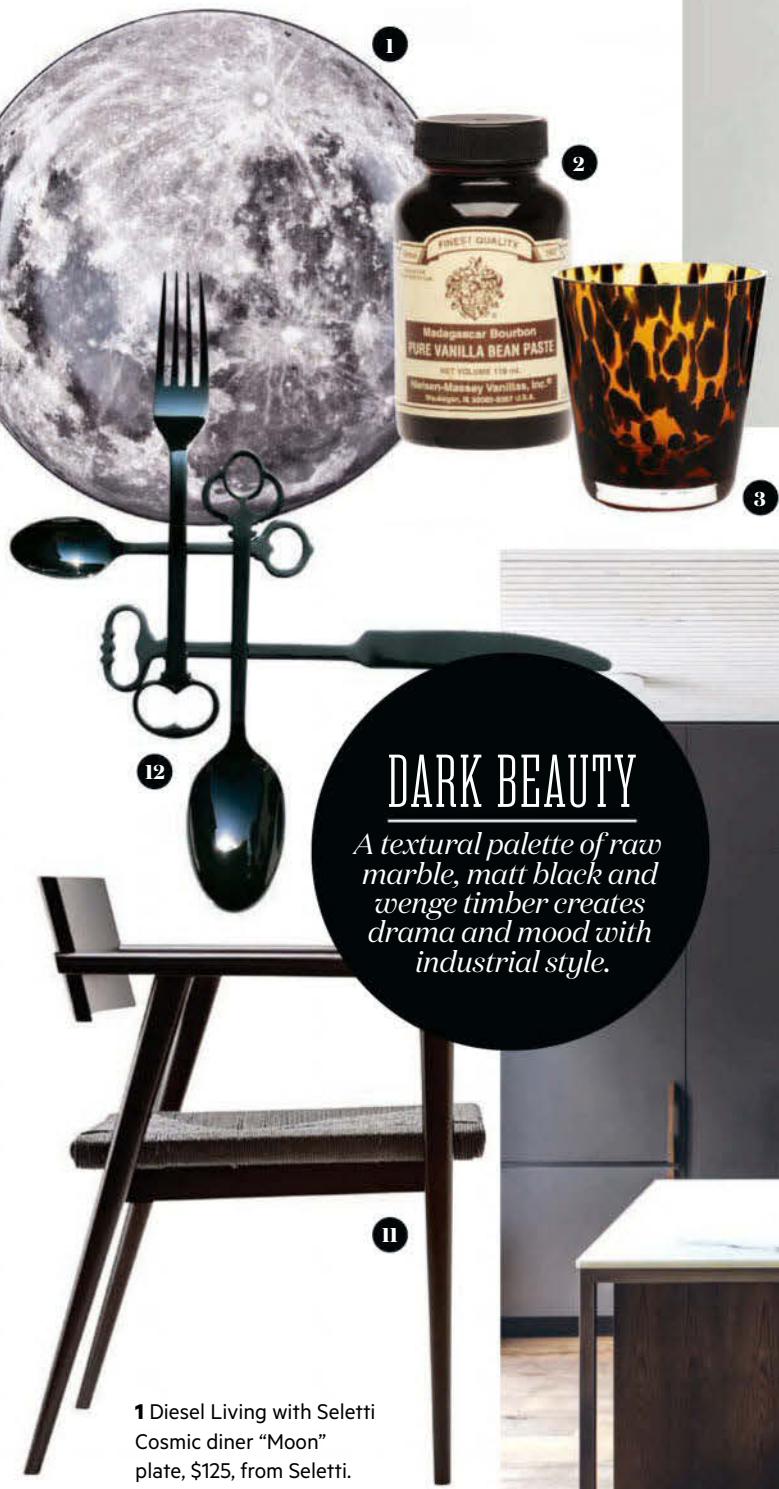


7

**1** Nero Marquina honed fan mosaic, \$420 per square metre, from Byzantine Design. **2** Abbotson linen napkins, \$49.95 for four, plus \$15 for monogramming, from Sheridan. **3** Ben-Tovim Design "Rough Diamond" chandelier, \$2900, from Catapult Design. **4** Versailles panel in European Oak, \$160 per square metre, from Woodstock Resources. **5** Itta marble dip bowl, \$39.95, from Country Road.

**6** Gubi "Beetle" chair, \$1574, from Cult. **7** Prego serving trays, from \$78, from Top3 by Design. **8** Redecker table sweeping set, \$75, from Saison. **9** Cutipol "Goa" knife, \$39.90, fork, \$21.90 and spoon, \$21.90, from Francalia. **10** Icon kitchen mixer in Tuscan Bronze, \$761, from Astra Walker. **11** Society cup and saucer, \$19.95, from Domayne. Stockists p183.>

## KITCHEN SPECIAL



**1** Diesel Living with Seletti Cosmic diner "Moon" plate, \$125, from Seletti.

**2** Nielsen Massey Vanilla Bean Paste, \$39.95, from Simon Johnson. **3** Oscar de la Renta "Tortoise" amber tumbler, \$60, from Peter's of Kensington. **4** Parachilna BAI pendant \$5759.65 from Ke-zu. **5** Barber & Osgerby "Olio" 16-piece set, \$249, from Royal Doulton.

**6** Cheese knife, \$220, from 1803 Artisan Deer Design.

**7** Michaël Verheyden Potte Lux vase (in three pieces), \$2450, from Becker Minty.

### DARK BEAUTY

*A textural palette of raw marble, matt black and wenge timber creates drama and mood with industrial style.*

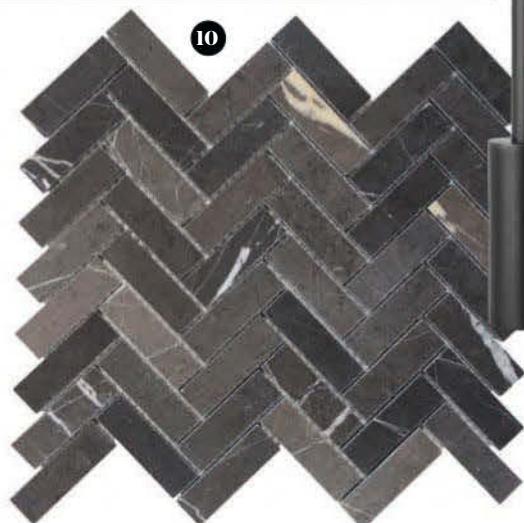


**8** Icon kitchen mixer, \$634, from Astra Walker. **9** Grater, \$29.95, from Domayne.

**10** Pietra Grey honed herringbone mosaic, \$298 per square metre, from Byzantine Design.

**11** L'Abbate "Dormitio" chair, from \$1080, from Catapult Design.

**12** "Keytlyery" cutlery, \$435 for a set of 24, from Seletti. Stockists p183.



**4**

**6**

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**8**

**9**



## MID-CENTURY

*Crisp mid-century forms and timbers bring a Scandinavian sensibility here, punctuated by bold hits of orange, pink and purple.*

1 Softscape pendants, from \$1260 each, from Stylecraft.  
2 Wazutsu cherry-bark tea caddy, \$199 each, from Ginkgo Leaf. 3 "Tokyo" teapot in Flower Pink, \$48, from T2. 4 Sabre "Aquarelle" fork, \$26, knife, \$32, and teaspoon, \$22, from Francalia. 5 Fibonacci Stone Idol terrazzo, \$105 per square metre, from Fibonacci Stone. 6 Normann Copenhagen peeler, \$20, from BYMR.

7 JIA tealight holder, \$55.90, from Top3 by Design. 8 Erik Buch bar stool in oak, \$950, from Great Dane Furniture.  
9 Fort Standard dry goods vessels, \$137.50, from Criteria Collection.  
10 Hay tea towels, \$48 each, from Cult.  
11 Design By Them Dial Hanger with Hook, \$79.20, from West of May. Stockists p183.>



## KITCHEN SPECIAL



**1** Tutto linen tea towels, \$32 each, from Hale Mercantile Co. **2** Emry pendant light in antique copper, from \$937, from Jardan. **3** Robert Gordon mini tapas plate in Saltbush, \$20, from Living Edge. **4** Honey pot and silicone dipper, \$35, from Le Creuset. **5** Large marble and mangowood chopping board, \$59.99, from Domayne. **6** All Circle Bar Stool, \$490, from Douglas

and Bec. **7** Hasami porcelain teapot, \$80, from Third Drawer Down. **8** Batch "Peasant" bowls, \$49.50 each, from Simon Johnson. **9** Barber & Osgerby "Olio" jug, \$79.95, from Royal Doulton. **10** Barbry chef's knife with oak holder, \$145, from Georg Jensen. **11** Leather tab, \$19, from MadeMeasure. Stockists p183.

### RAW EDGES

Rugged wood, natural linen and hand-turned ceramics lend an earthy edge to a pearly white backdrop.



10



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1 Voyage en Ikat plate, \$315, from Hermès.

2 Fusion tile in Blue India, \$315 per square metre, from Signorino Tile Gallery.

3 Tom Dixon "Tank" lowball glass, \$95 for two, jug, \$200, decanter, \$200, and highball glass, \$120 for two, from De De Ce Plus. 4 Dinosaur Designs resin flower servers, \$120.

5 Comet pendant light, \$299, from Domayne. 6 Redecker copper cloth, \$14.95, from

## Kupfertuch

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Für Töpfe, Pfannen, Spülz., Herd, Gegenstände aus Glas, Edelstahl, Leder, Kork, Naturholz oder Besteck – ideal auch für Fleisch-, und Wurstwaren, sowie für Schalen, Chromstahl und alle Folgen beim Aut...



## MOOD INDIGO

*Contemporary lines meet traditional touches in a blend of rich blue hues, copper accents and ikat-style design.*



9

# The cook's kitchen

Meet three dedicated cooks whose kitchens are more than beautiful showpieces – the focus of family life and entertaining alike, they're truly the heart of the home.





Ruth  
Ritchie

### ISLAND LIFE

My kitchen island is like a madwoman's computer desktop – okay, my desktop. Ironically, it's a yin-yang composite of marble and recycled timber, disguised with a collage of permission slips, broken iPod chargers and ripening tomatoes.

I built the kitchen around the island and the house around the kitchen. The second house and the seventh kitchen – I only have myself to blame for any mistakes. I've always cooked and entertained, but lately it's been more practical to have guests and homeworking children sitting at the island while I cook.

We eat entrées, leftovers, cake at the island, simply pushing permission slips aside. It becomes a night-lit altar at which to hover and gossip; it houses all the big saucepans, hanging pans and the gong I brought back for one of the kids from Shanghai. There's a purpose-built shelf for chopping boards and silicon mats. The kitchen island is the Tardis.

A suite of Miele wall ovens fits the bill after experiments with freestanding and wide wall ovens. One is dead basic, to cook a cake, the other is so capable it might write a novel. The third is a convection microwave (house full of boys – don't judge!). The fourth remains the inevitable kitchen failure that's not usually hidden in such plain sight. Five years on, the "revolutionary steam oven" remains a virgin, and an ideal place to hide posh chocolate.



It's easy to gravlax a side of salmon, pickle some Spanish onions and whip up some wasabi cream – all served at the island – then migrate to the dining room for the main course.

Ottolenghi salads and sides, married up with my buttermilk panko deep-fried chicken or fried garfish, are staples. And I still cook the same old Gretta Anna desserts I learnt from my mother. What was I thinking with that steam oven?

*Ruth Ritchie is a film and television columnist for The Sydney Morning Herald.>*

### ALTAR STATES

Ruth Ritchie at her kitchen island, the hub of home life. Opposite: Manuela Darling-Gansser in her Sydney kitchen.

## KITCHEN SPECIAL



Manuela  
Darling-  
Gansser

### WHERE THE HEART IS

The centrepiece of the kitchen is a long bench, which I've always wanted so people can sit around while I cook. I wanted the kitchen to be the heart of the house, not somewhere hidden away. When I'm cooking, I can look outside – I have this incredible view of the beach – and I feel very much a part of what's happening outside. Nick Tobias was the architect and John Richards was the site architect; they both helped design it, with a lot of input from myself and my husband Michael.

It's a very functional kitchen – there's nothing precious about it. I wanted marble for the main bench because I do a lot of baking, and we used American oak for the cupboards and the floor. I have a Wolf oven and cooktop, which I really like because it's very industrial – there's nothing sissy about it. And I love the stovetop because you can really control the gas. I'm a bit of an old-fashioned cook – I love to see a flame.

I cook all the time. I have people dropping in and out often, which I love; they come in just to say "hi" and will often stay for lunch or dinner. On the weekends the kids come for big, long lunches.

My cuisine is based on [that of] Piedmont and Lugano and I love to do antipasti – I will do lots of different dishes for the table and people will help themselves. We also eat a lot of seafood. I have a blog ([manuelafoodandtravel.com](http://manuelafoodandtravel.com)) and I always do the cooking and the photographing in this kitchen because the light is so lovely. It's just such a joy to cook in here. It really is the heart of the house.

*Manuela Darling-Gansser is a Sydney-based cookbook author and travel writer.*



Terry  
Wu

### NATURE CALLS

We inherited this kitchen four years ago. It had just been renovated and won an Australian Institute of Architects award, then the owners decided to sell and we loved it.

The house is basically glass on three sides, opening up to a very large garden. So the kitchen is right in the middle of this glass box, if you like, and when we cook we can look outside and it's really quite divine.

It was designed by Multiplicity (architect Tim O'Sullivan and interior designer Sioux Clark) and they use a lot of earthy surfaces like timber with natural finishes, lots of recycled touches; and the cabinetry, with steel handles and columns, is all bespoke.

The kitchen itself is relatively compact, but we've gotten so used to it that we've decided not to add touches of our own, even though we were planning to. I bought an induction cooktop to put in, but in the end I decided I quite liked the Bosch gas cooktop so my induction is now in storage.

It has a very large entertaining area; the benchtop is about four metres long. We often have friends over and have dinner parties. We steam a lot of fish – I love coral trout. Ragoût with mushrooms is something we whip up all the time. My partner loves osso buco and she cooks a fantastic risotto, too, which I think is as good as any restaurant in Melbourne.

I love this kitchen. It's very functional, but it's really about the aspect – how you're cooking with the view of a forest. There are lots of beautiful kitchens with Aga cooktops and massive burners, which I love as well, but this is a more compact kitchen; it's more earthy, more pared-back, but it's got a big soul and a big heart.

*Terry Wu is a plastic surgeon based in Melbourne. ●*



#### VIEW POINTS

Manuela Darling-Gansser's bright and breezy kitchen looks out to the beach, while Terry Wu enjoys his forest outlook.

Opposite: Terry Wu.

"I love this kitchen. It's very functional,  
but it's *really about the aspect* – how  
you're cooking with the view of a forest."



# Kitchen wizardry

*Making magic in the kitchen is a whole lot easier with smart appliances. Georgia Madden rounds up the latest and greatest.*

## APPLIANCES



*Way more than handy gadgets, these kitchen whizzes can revolutionise the way you prepare your food. They look good, too.*

### 1 TEFLA CUISINE COMPANION, \$1699

Sit back and relax while this multi-function machine does the chopping, steaming, stirring and kneading for you. It has six automatic programs, 12 speeds, a 4.5-litre bowl and adjustable temperatures from 30C to 130C. *Tefal, cuisinecompanion.com.au*

### 2 SUNBEAM SECRETCHEF ELECTRONIC SEAR AND SLOW COOKER HP8555, \$199

Forget fiddling around with separate pans; this snazzy machine allows you to brown and slow-cook meat in one device. It has a 5.5-litre capacity,

eight heat settings, and electronic controls. *Sunbeam, 1300 881 861, sunbeam.com.au*

### 3 KITCHENAID ESPRESSO MACHINE KES2102, \$1999

A commercial-quality machine for the coffee connoisseur, this 1300-watt model features two boilers for consistent performance with no delay between brewing and frothing, and die-cast metal construction. *KitchenAid, kitchenaid.com.au*

### 4 CUISINART MINI-PREP FOOD PROCESSOR 46815, \$99.95

Add a pop of colour to your kitchen with this funky little 200-watt mini blender

that's powerful enough to do everything from chopping herbs to grating cheese (it's also available in blue, green, purple and pink). *Cuisinart, 1800 808 971, cuisinart.com.au*

### 5 MIELE BENCHTOP COFFEE MACHINE CM6300, \$1599

This compact automatic espresso machine is perfect for small kitchens, and is designed to match Miele's Generation 6000 built-in appliances for a seamless look. Features include intuitive controls and a time-saving "OneTouch for Two" function that allows users to make two cups

of coffee simultaneously. *Miele, 1300 464 353, mieleshop.com.au*

### 6 SMEG STAND MIXER SMF01, \$799

Retro-cool and packed with features, this 800-watt stand mixer has an enamel-coated stainless steel body, 10-speed variable power, and a "planetary" mixing action to ensure all areas of the bowl are reached. *Smeg, (02) 8667 4888, smeg.com.au*

### 7 DE'LONGHI DISTINTA TWO-SLICE TOASTER CTI2003CP, \$169

With its chic lines and matte copper finish, you won't want to pack this Italian-designed

900-watt toaster away after breakfast. It boasts electronic controls, chrome-plated features and metal-wrapped touch points. *De'Longhi, 1800 126 659, delonghi.com*

### 8 KAMBROOK BELGIAN DUAL WAFFLE PRESS KWM200BSS, \$59.95

Mouth-watering waffles are easy with this 1100-watt machine. It has a non-stick coating for easy cleaning and waffle removal, and 2cm-deep plate for thick waffles. *Kambrook, 1300 139 798, kambrook.com.au*



## OVENS

*The hottest ovens, with intelligent features such as temperature control and pyrolytic cleaning.*

### 1 FALCON CLASSIC 110CM INDUCTION COOKER CLAS110EI, \$8319

This handsome cooker has a fast-heating induction cooktop, two electric ovens, a programmable oven function and residual heat indicators on the hob.

Andi-co, 1800 685 899, [andico.com.au](http://andico.com.au)

### 2 GAGGENAU 76CM PYROLYTIC DOUBLE OVEN BX48, \$19,999

This top-of-the-range oven has 17 heating methods, pyrolytic cleaning, TFT touch display and electronic temperature control from 30C to 300C. Gaggenau, [gaggenau.com.au](http://gaggenau.com.au); Sampford IXL, 1300 727 421

### 3 BOSCH SERIES 8 MULTIFUNCTION OVEN WITH ADDED STEAM HRG676S1A, \$3299

This fully intuitive model does it all, from finding the perfect temperature and cooking time to monitoring the progress of baked goods and switching off when they're done. Bosch, [bosch-home.com.au](http://bosch-home.com.au)

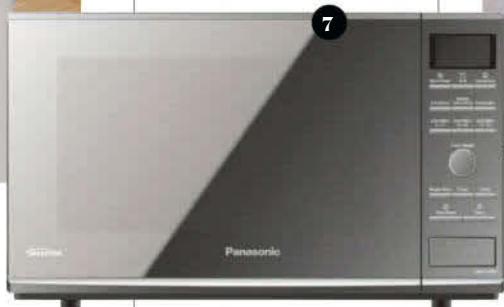
### 4 BLANCO FREESTANDING OVEN BFD915WX, \$2499

At 150 litres, this 90cm dual-fuel model has the largest-capacity oven, the fastest heat-up time and a multi-fan system for even heat. Blanco, 1300 739 033, [blanco-australia.com](http://blanco-australia.com)



## MICROWAVES

*The latest models offer convection cooking, grilling and steaming.*



### 5 NEFF BUILT-IN MICROWAVE C54L60N3GB, \$1599

This stylish, built-in 60cm model has seven automatic programs, five power levels, two recipe memory positions, electronic controls, and Innowave technology for even cooking results. *Winning Appliances*, (02) 9694 0300, [winningappliances.com.au](http://winningappliances.com.au)

### 6 LG COMBI MICROWAVE OVEN MA3281T, \$999

This smart four-in-one model offers convection, microwave, grill and steam cooking. Appealing extras include an easy control panel and Infraspeed heating for tastier results. *LG*, [lg.com](http://lg.com)

### 7 PANASONIC FLATBED MICROWAVE OVEN NN-CF770M, \$749

Running out of oven space? Consider this combination model that offers microwave and convection cooking in one. It features a flatbed design (so no turntable), and inverter technology that results in even cooking. *Domayne* (in-store only), [domayne.com.au](http://domayne.com.au)

## COOKTOPS

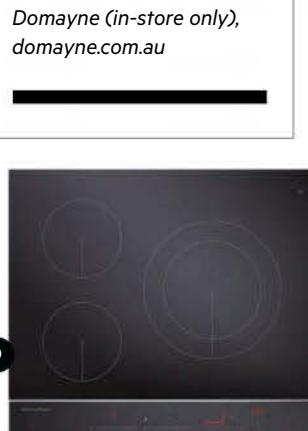
*From flame to flat-top induction.*

### 8 ILVE PIANO FLUSHLINE 60CM GAS COOKTOP ILFM604TC, \$1999

Choose between a built-in flush or semi-flush top for this four-gas-burner cooktop. Features include front sensor control panels, programmable cooking times, electronic ignition, and quality cast-iron trivets. *Ilve*, 1300 694 583, [ilve.com.au](http://ilve.com.au)

### 9 FISHER & PAYKEL THREE-ZONE 60CM INDUCTION COOKTOP C1603DTB2, \$1849

This newly released induction cooktop features rapid heating, a flat easy-clean frameless glass surface, pan-detection system, and touch-and-slide electronic controls. *Fisher & Paykel*, [fisherpaykel.com/au](http://fisherpaykel.com/au)



## KITCHEN SPECIAL

### FRIDGES

*French doors are the look du jour for refrigerators. Keep it chic in stainless steel or black.*



1



3



2

#### 1 WESTINGHOUSE FRENCH DOOR REFRIGERATOR WHE7670SA, \$2799

The perfect size for families, this fridge has a 762-litre capacity, an ice and water dispenser, humidity-controlled crispers and electronic touch controls. [domayne.com.au](http://domayne.com.au)

#### 2 MITSUBISHI L4 GRANDE FRENCH DOOR 710-LITRE REFRIGERATOR MR-L710EG-DB-A, \$3400

With its dramatic black finish, this fridge is designed to be noticed. Features include a multi-airflow system that keeps food fresh for longer, an ice dispenser and

heat-resistant tempered glass shelves that hold up to 101kg. [domayne.com.au](http://domayne.com.au)

#### 3 SAMSUNG FOOD SHOWCASE 636-LITRE SIDE-BY-SIDE REFRIGERATOR SRS636SCLS 636L, \$4599

Another smart door-in-door design that gives you quick access to on-the-go items. This fridge also features an in-door ice-maker, triple cooling technology and LED lighting. [samsung.com.au](http://samsung.com.au)

#### 4 LG FIVE-DOOR FRENCH DOOR 712-LITRE REFRIGERATOR GF5D712-SL, \$5199

Thanks to its door-in-door design you'll have access



4

to items without affecting its interior temperature. It also features an in-door ice-maker and three full-width shelves.

[lg.com/au](http://lg.com/au)



5

### DISH-WASHERS

*Energy efficiency? Tick. Quiet? Tick. Super-dry and squeaky clean dishes? Tick. These washers cover all the bases.*

#### 5 MIELE FULLY-INTEGRATED DISHWASHER G6995 SCVI XXL K20 AUS, \$4299

This clever and stylish 60cm model has a handle-free motorised door that automatically opens at the end of the cycle so all items are completely dry. It also has a 3.5-star energy rating and 5.5-star WELS rating.

*Miele, 1300 464 353, [mieleshop.com.au](http://mieleshop.com.au)*

#### 6 DE'LONGHI FREESTANDING DISHWASHER DEDW650S, \$1199

Good looks and quiet operation define this model. It's energy efficient, too, with a 3.5-star energy rating and 5-star WELS rating. It also features a durable, brushless motor and separate cutlery tray.

*De'Longhi, 1800 126 659, [delonghi.com/en-au](http://delonghi.com/en-au)*

#### 7 SIEMENS IQ700 TALLTUB FULLY-INTEGRATED DISHWASHER SX678X01TA, \$2699

A feature-laden 60cm model that has efficient

drying, a flexible loading system, colour TFT display (which projects remaining cycle time on the floor), a pre-programming option, and 4.5-star energy and 5-star WELS ratings.

*Siemens, 1300 368 339, [siemens-home.com.au](http://siemens-home.com.au)*

#### 8 FISHER & PAYKEL BUILT-IN DOUBLE DISHDRAWER DD60DCX7, \$1599

Forget bending to load and unload – this model can be positioned at a comfortable height in the kitchen. It has two drawers, nine wash programmes, a 3.5-star energy and 4.5-star WELS rating. *Harvey Norman, 1300 464 278, [harveynorman.com.au](http://harveynorman.com.au)*



6



7



8



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Album cover shoot for Aladdin Sane, 1973. Photograph by Brian Duffy.  
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BLANCO, in conjunction with *Gourmet Traveller*, is giving two lucky readers a chance to win an Ultimate BLANCO Kitchen package. Whether you're whipping up a midweek meal or perfecting a favourite dish, a new kitchen is the perfect place to try out the latest *Gourmet Traveller* recipes, so see how to enter below.

#### Ultimate BLANCO Kitchen package includes:

- ① SILGRANIT PuraDur sink (tapware pictured not included)
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- ④ Freestanding eight-program dishwasher
- ⑤ European-style black glass four-burner gas cooktop
- ⑥ Elite seven-function electric oven

#### How to enter

For your chance to win one of two Ultimate BLANCO Kitchen packages, visit *Gourmet Traveller*'s website at [gourmettraveller.com.au/blancocomp](http://gourmettraveller.com.au/blancocomp), submit your full name, address and daytime telephone number, and tell us in 25 words or fewer why your kitchen is the heart of your home?

Open to Australian residents aged 18 years and over. Starts 29 June 2015 and ends 26 July 2015 at 11.59pm AEST. Limit one entry per person.

# BLANCO



## COOKING WITH GAS

Neil Perry with part of the range he has developed with Omega.

# Just like a pro

Neil Perry launches a professional-powered range for the domestic kitchen, writes ***Maya Kerthyasa***.

**Neil Perry is coming** soon to a home near you. Not in the literal sense, of course, but via Neil Perry Kitchen, a new range of domestic cooking appliances he has produced with Australian brand Omega.

The promise of direct involvement in the project was the initial drawcard for Perry and now, three years down the track, he's on the brink of launching his first collection comprising three ovens, two gas stovetops, two rangehoods, an induction cooktop, a wine refrigerator, and a wok burner.

"[It's] something I've thought about doing for a long time and would have loved to have done probably even sooner," Perry says, "but it's great to have found the right partner because it's like any relationship: if people don't allow you to become fully immersed in it, then it's not as rewarding."

**“I spent days going through what's important for me at work, and what I hate about the home kitchen.”**

The idea, he says, was to create beautiful, sturdy cookware that ticks the boxes both aesthetically and functionally – filling a gap in a market heavy with products that, according to Perry, want for strength and durability.

"I probably spent days going through what I love, what's important for me at work, and what I hate about the home kitchen," he says, "and then we started to take that into practicality."

The result? Sharp appliances for serious home cooks with big easy-to-read and easy-to-turn dials, streamlined cooktops designed to fit any sized pot or pan, fuss-free analogue oven clocks and a distinct lack of screens and confusing buttons. "It's almost like when you're driving a beautiful luxury car," Perry says. "Everyone else is trying to do all this rubbish; [this is] just a fantastic, simple design."

There's some serious power behind these machines, too. The wok burner – a striking piece of kit with a luxe black-glass and stainless-steel base – has more grunt than anything else in the domestic sphere, while the 90-centimetre built-in oven has a larger cavity than the standard, equalling that of a 90-centimetre freestanding cooker. It's also the first to have adjustable heat outputs to suit different kinds of cooking.

"A lot of stuff just feels domestic and looks domestic," he says, "and we really set out to create something that was in the domestic environment that felt more commercial."

The 10-piece collection, which comes in around the Miele price point, is the beginning of what Perry hopes will blossom into a long-term relationship with Omega. And he already has plans for phase two. He's gunning for a freestanding cooker, an induction wok, a combi oven and a charcoal grill for summer.

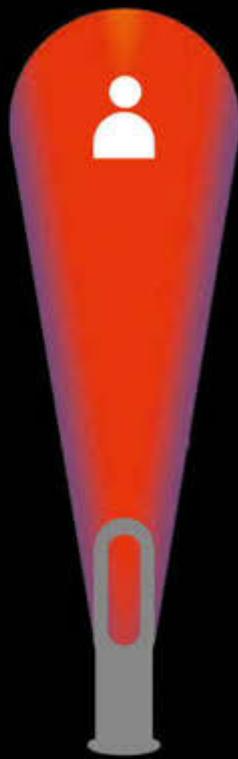
The line launches at the end of September, and will be stocked at major retailers such as Harvey Norman. Perry is working on having it featured in the commercial (read: fancy apartment block) end of the spectrum, too. "I'm able to talk to the head buyers and the guys looking after the apartment blocks," he says, "and really put forward the best argument for why these are as good or better than what we're looking at as our major competitors."

Through the venture he hopes to make Australian kitchens a whole lot more efficient and more beautiful.

"I think that visually it'll grab people's attention, and then I think they'll delve into the capability and really enjoy that it's about form and function." ● [neilperrykitchen.com.au](http://neilperrykitchen.com.au)

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JULY 2015

# food

Curries, soups and the comfort of custard – it's time to hunker down for soul food packed with flavour.

**The power of one** From souped-up seasonal seafood to tonkotsu ramen, we're making a meal of soups.

**Curry favour** Whether it's a mellow lamb korma or a tangy barramundi number, curries bring spice to your life.

**Popular culture** In a magical transformation, fermentation brings layers of flavour and depth to all manner of preparations.

**Turn to custard** Nothing spells comfort like custard. Baked, fried as a fritter or poured with pudding, it's the making of many a sweet.





Fragrant chicken  
noodle soup (RECIPE P119)



**NOODLE SOUP**

RG Terra bowl from  
Chef and the Cook.

Cutipol chopsticks from  
Francalia. **CHOWDER**

Casserole from Chef and  
the Cook. Porcelain cup  
from Koskela. All other  
props stylist's own.  
Stockists p183.



WATCH & MAKE

Watch Emma Knowles make our cover recipe with the free **viewa** app, on iPad (pick up our digital edition via the Apple App Store) or online: [gourmettraveller.com.au](http://gourmettraveller.com.au)



New England-style  
clam chowder and  
crackers (RECIPE P119)

# the power of one

We're making a meal of soups. With the hearty likes of seasonal seafood souped up New England-style to tonkotsu ramen, we've got a wealth of mighty one-pot wonders.

RECIPES & FOOD STYLING LISA FEATHERBY PHOTOGRAPHY CHRIS CHEN  
STYLING LYNSEY FRYERS-HEDRICK



Barley, mushroom and beef broth

### Barley, mushroom and beef broth

*Beef shin gives soups a rich flavour and the bonus of gelatinous tendon, too. Beef and barley are a wonderful combination and the perfect companion to a glass of red on a wintry night.*

**Cook time 35 mins, cook 4 hrs**

**Serves 6**

- 60 ml (1/4 cup) grapeseed oil
- 750 gm boneless beef shin or shank, cut into thirds
- 200 ml dry white wine
- 1.5 litres (6 cups) chicken stock
- 1 litre (4 cups) veal stock
- 4 thyme sprigs
- 200 gm pearl barley, rinsed
- 2 large onions, finely chopped
- 300 gm chestnut, shiitake and shimeji or other assorted mushrooms, torn into bite-sized pieces
- Finely grated parmesan, to serve

**1** Preheat oven to 200C. Heat 1 tbsp oil in a casserole over high heat, add beef and brown all over (5-6 minutes). Deglaze casserole with wine and simmer to reduce by a third (about 5 minutes), then add stocks and thyme and bring to the boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer uncovered until beef is just tender (2-2½ hours). Add barley and simmer, adding water if necessary, until meat and barley are very tender (1-1½ hours). Remove beef and, when cool enough to handle, shred into bite-sized pieces, return to broth, season to taste and keep warm.

**2** Meanwhile, cook onion in remaining oil in a saucepan over low-medium heat, stirring occasionally, until caramelised (35-45 minutes). Stir in mushrooms, then add to broth, bring to a simmer and cook uncovered, stirring occasionally, until mushrooms are tender (5-10 minutes). Serve broth hot scattered with parmesan.

### Lamb and spring onion pancake soup

*The pancakes here are similar to roti-style flatbread. Torn into pieces and added to the bowl, they come to resemble little dumplings as they soak up the broth. You could also serve them on the side for guests to tear themselves.*

**Prep time 35 mins, cook 5 hrs**

**Serves 6**

- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1 piece cassia bark
- 1.5 kg lamb bones, trimmed of excess fat and cut into 10cm pieces (see note)
- 1 onion, coarsely chopped
- 1 garlic head, halved
- 80 ml (1/3 cup) light soy sauce
- 2 large hindquarter lamb shanks (about 300gm each)
- Thinly sliced spring onions and chilli oil, to serve
- Spring onion pancakes**
- 4 spring onions, coarsely chopped
- 60 ml (1/4 cup) grapeseed oil
- 400 gm (2½ cups) plain flour, plus extra for dusting
- Black sesame seeds, for scattering

**1** Dry-roast cumin seeds and cassia in a large stockpot over medium heat until fragrant (20-30 seconds; see cook's notes p184). Add lamb bones, onion, garlic and soy sauce, and cover completely with water (about 3 litres). Bring to the boil, skim scum from the surface, reduce heat to low and simmer uncovered for 1 hour. Add lamb shanks, cover with a lid and simmer until meat is falling from the bone (3-3½ hours). Remove lamb shanks and cool briefly, then pull meat from the bones and shred into bite-sized pieces. Strain stock through a large sieve into a clean saucepan (discard solids), then return shank meat to stock, season to taste and keep warm.

**2** For spring onion pancakes, preheat oven to 250C. Process spring onion with oil in a food processor until finely chopped and well combined with oil. Mix flour and 500ml cold water in an electric mixer fitted with a dough hook until a smooth dough forms. Meanwhile, place a 23cm ovenproof frying pan in the oven. Divide dough into 6 pieces then, working with a piece at a time, roll on a lightly floured surface to a 23cm-diameter round. Spread 2 tsp spring onion oil over dough, then roll dough to form a rope shape. Coil dough into a spiral, roll out again to a 20cm round and scatter with black sesame seeds. Cook on heated pan in the oven while you roll the next, turning once, until golden and cooked through (about 5 minutes). Transfer to a board and, when cool enough to handle, tear or cut into bite-size pieces, and divide among serving bowls, or leave whole to serve alongside soup.

**3** Bring soup to a simmer and ladle into the bowls. Scatter with spring onion and serve hot with chilli oil.

**Note** Lamb bones may need to be ordered from the butcher; ask the butcher to chop them up, too.>

Torn into pieces and added to the bowl, these roti-style pancakes come to *resemble dumplings* as they soak up the broth.

Lamb and spring onion pancake soup



**RAMEN** Indeco handcrafted  
tablespoons from Koskela.  
All other props stylist's own.  
**TEXT PAGE** All props  
stylist's own. Stockists p183.



Bacon and egg  
tonkotsu ramen

## Bacon and egg tonkotsu ramen

*Tonkotsu is one of the classic broths served with ramen, made by boiling pork bones until the collagen and fat create a creamy, gelatinous stock – so rich and lip-smackingly good. If you don't have time to spare, you could use a dashi or miso soup base instead.*

**Prep time 35 mins, cook 3 hrs 35 mins**

Serves 4

- 2 eggs at room temperature
- 350 gm ramen noodles
- 150 gm rindless bacon, chopped
- 40 gm black fungi, thinly sliced  
Nori toasted over a flame and cut into strips, and sesame seeds (optional), to serve
- Shichimi togarashi (see note), to serve
- Tonkotsu broth**
- 1.5 kg large pork bones, cut into 10cm-15cm pieces and rinsed (see note)
- 60 ml (1/4 cup) konbu seasoning (see note)

**1** For tonkotsu broth, place pork bones in a stockpot with konbu seasoning, cover with 4 litres water and bring to the boil over high heat. Skim scum from surface and boil, topping up with water if necessary to keep bones just covered, until broth is cloudy, creamy and gelatinous, then simmer to reduce to 2 litres (3-3½ hours). Strain stock through a large sieve, season to taste and keep warm.

**2** Cook eggs in a saucepan of simmering water over medium heat until medium-boiled (7 minutes for medium yolks). Peel and halve just before serving.

**3** Cook ramen noodles in a saucepan of boiling water until al dente (4-5 minutes), then drain and divide among warm serving bowls.

**4** Meanwhile, fry bacon in a frying pan over high heat until crisp and golden brown (4-6 minutes).

**5** Pour tonkotsu broth over ramen noodles, top with half an egg, bacon, fungi, nori and sesame seeds, season to taste with shichimi togarashi and serve hot.

**Note** Shichimi togarashi, a Japanese seven-spice chilli powder, is available from Japanese grocers and from [herbies.com.au](http://herbies.com.au). Ask your butcher to cut up the pork bones for you. Konbu seasoning, also known as konbu tsuyu, is available from Asian supermarkets. Substitute light soy sauce if it's unavailable.

## HOT TIP

You can use clams already prepared for the pot that come in sealed bags and don't need soaking, available from select fishmongers; these keep well refrigerated for a few days.

## Fragrant chicken noodle soup

*Chicken noodle soup is the perfect restorative, especially with chilli, turmeric and ginger added for extra goodness. The soup base can be made ahead and frozen so it's ready to go when needed.*

**Prep time 30 mins, cook 1½ hrs**

Serves 6 (pictured p114)

- 3 litres (12 cups) butcher-quality chicken stock
- 1 chicken (about 1.5kg), rinsed, patted dry
- 2 lemongrass stalks (white part only), thinly sliced
- 6 small dried red chillies
- 2 tsp each coriander seeds and cumin seeds
- 1 tsp black peppercorns
- 5 red shallots, coarsely chopped
- 2 tbsp finely chopped ginger
- 2 tsp finely chopped fresh turmeric
- 200 gm dried Vietnamese vermicelli (bun tuo)
- Fish sauce and lime juice, to season
- Chinese chives, coriander and lime wedges, to serve
- Fried shallots and garlic**
- Vegetable oil, for deep-frying
- 6 red shallots, thinly sliced on a mandolin
- 6 garlic cloves, thinly sliced on a mandolin

**1** Bring stock to the boil over high heat in a very large saucepan, add chicken and lemongrass, and bring back to the boil, then reduce heat to low-medium, simmer for 10 minutes, then turn off heat, cover with a lid and leave to continue cooking chicken in stock until juices run clear when pierced with a skewer (1½ hours). Remove chicken from stock and, when cool enough to handle, tear meat into bite-size pieces. Strain stock, return to saucepan with chicken meat, season to taste and set aside.

**2** Dry-roast chillies over medium-high heat until fragrant and toasted (30-40 seconds; see cook's notes p184) and reserve for serving. Dry-roast whole spices in same pan until fragrant (10-20 seconds), finely grind with a mortar and pestle, then add shallots, ginger, turmeric and a pinch of salt and pound to a smooth paste. Reserve.

**3** Place noodles in a large heatproof bowl. Cover with boiling water and stand until cooked al dente (2-4 minutes). Drain and leave to cool slightly, then chop with scissors into serving bowls.

**4** For fried shallots and garlic, heat 5cm oil in a wok or small saucepan over medium-high heat until it shimmers. Add shallots and stir-fry until golden brown and crisp (1-2 minutes). Remove with a slotted spoon and drain on paper towels, then repeat with garlic. Strain and reserve oil.

**5** Heat 1 tbsp reserved shallot oil in a frying pan over medium heat, add shallot paste and stir continuously until fragrant (1-2 minutes). Add to chicken broth, bring to the boil, season to taste with fish sauce and lime juice, then pour into bowls over vermicelli noodles. Scatter with dry-roasted chilli, fried shallots and garlic and herbs, drizzle with shallot oil to taste (see note) and serve with lime wedges.

**Note** Remaining cooled oil will keep in an airtight container for a week and can be used to cook and flavour other dishes.

## New England-style clam chowder and crackers

*Chowders are so satisfying in winter and it's the ideal time of year for many shellfish, too. There are many varieties of chowder in the US, but the New England style is a favourite. Crackers can be crumbled in to thicken it, or you can just dip them in as you go.*

**Prep time 20 mins, cook 30 mins**

Serves 6 (pictured p115)

- 40 gm butter, coarsely chopped
- 200 gm rindless bacon, chopped
- 2 celery stalks, finely chopped
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 120 ml dry white wine
- 1 kg clams, soaked in cold water for 1 hour to remove grit
- 750 ml (3 cups) chicken stock
- 750 gm Desiree potatoes (about 3), quartered and thickly sliced
- 125 ml (1/2 cup) pouring cream
- 1 dried bay leaf
- 2 skinless bream fillets (400gm), pin-boned and cut into 3cm-4cm pieces
- 12 scallops, white muscle trimmed
- 2 tbsp coarsely chopped flat-leaf parsley, plus extra to serve
- Saltine crackers, to serve

**1** Melt butter in a large saucepan over high heat. Add bacon, celery and onion, and sauté until vegetables are tender (about 10 minutes).

**2** Meanwhile, bring wine to the boil in a separate large saucepan over high heat. Add clams, cover with a lid and shake pan occasionally until they open (2-3 minutes). Strain through a fine sieve, set clams aside to cool slightly and add cooking liquid to the bacon mixture along with the stock. Remove the clam meat from most of the shells, reserving a few in shells to garnish.

**3** Bring stock mixture to the boil over medium-high heat, add potato, cream and bay leaf, and simmer





**Chickpea soup with sumac and yoghurt**

uncovered until potato is tender, coarsely breaking it up with a wooden spoon the towards end of cooking (15-20 minutes). Add bream, reduce heat to medium and simmer uncovered until bream is almost cooked through (4-5 minutes). Add scallops and simmer until almost cooked (1 minute), then stir in parsley and reserved clams and clam meat and season to taste. Serve hot, scattered with extra parsley and with saltine crackers for dipping or breaking over.

### **Chickpea soup with sumac and yoghurt**

*This soup is almost a stew with warming spices and lamb added for extra-meaty flavour – it's best eaten on the day it's made because the moghrabieh will continue to soak up a lot of liquid overnight. Start this recipe a day ahead to soak the chickpeas.*

**Prep time 15 mins, cook 2 hrs (plus soaking)**

**Serves 4-6**

- 3 tsp each cumin seeds and coriander seeds
- 1 tsp fennel seeds
- 2 tbsp grapeseed oil
- 200 gm lamb fillet, finely diced
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, pounded to paste with a mortar and pestle with a pinch of salt
- 3 tsp sweet paprika

- 150 gm dried chickpeas, soaked overnight in cold water, drained
- 2 litres (8 cups) butcher-quality chicken stock
- 400 gm canned tomato polpa
- 1 tsp sumac, or to taste, plus extra to serve
- 1/4 tsp cayenne pepper, or to taste
- 250 gm (1½ cups) moghrabieh (see note), rinsed
- Silverbeet (about 1 bunch), stalks discarded, leaves coarsely chopped
- Coarsely chopped coriander and mint, to serve
- Plain yoghurt, to serve

- 1 Dry-roast whole spices until fragrant (20-30 seconds; see cook's notes p184), cool slightly, then crush with a mortar and pestle and set aside.
- 2 Heat oil in a large saucepan over high heat until hot, add lamb and brown all over (4-6 minutes). Remove with a slotted spoon and cool, then refrigerate until required.
- 3 Reduce heat to medium, add onion to pan and stir occasionally until very tender and starting to caramelise (10-12 minutes), adding garlic in the last minute of cooking. Add paprika and crushed spices, stir until colour deepens (1 minute), then add chickpeas and stir to combine. Add stock, tomato, sumac and cayenne pepper, bring to the boil, then reduce heat to low-medium and simmer uncovered, stirring occasionally, until chickpeas

are tender (1-1½ hours). Add moghrabieh and reserved lamb, adjust seasoning and cook until moghrabieh is puffed and tender (35-40 minutes). Thin soup with water if necessary, then add silverbeet and simmer uncovered, stirring occasionally, until silverbeet wilts (2-3 minutes). Serve topped with coriander, mint, extra sumac and a dollop of yoghurt.

**Note** Moghrabieh, a Middle Eastern pearl couscous, is available from select delicatessens and Middle Eastern grocers.

### **Bread and cabbage soup with Fontina and thyme**

*This soup is a fairly classic Italian-style bread soup with cheese melted through the layers of sourdough. You could use any semi-firm cheese you like – cheddar or Gruyère would work well – while rye bread or miche instead of white sourdough would be lovely, too.*

**Prep time 20 mins, cook 1 hr**

**Serves 6**

- 400 gm day-old crusty white sourdough bread, thickly sliced
- 2 garlic cloves, halved
- 30 gm butter, coarsely chopped
- 1 tbsp grapeseed oil
- 1 onion, thinly sliced
- 600 gm cabbage (about ½), coarsely chopped
- 1.5 litres (6 cups) chicken stock
- 200 ml dry white wine
- 1 tsp thyme
- 300 gm Fontina, coarsely grated
- 100 gm parmesan, finely grated

- 1 Preheat oven to 200C. Rub bread slices well with cut sides of garlic cloves and set aside (discard garlic).
- 2 Heat butter and oil in a large casserole over medium-high heat, add onion and sauté until tender (5-10 minutes). Add cabbage and cook, stirring occasionally, until wilted and starting to caramelise (8-12 minutes). Transfer to a bowl.
- 3 Bring stock, wine and thyme to the boil in a saucepan over high heat, season to taste.
- 4 Meanwhile, layer bread, cheeses and cabbage mixture in the casserole, finishing with a scattering of cheeses. Pour hot stock over and bake uncovered, pushing bread down into stock occasionally, until cheese melts and bread is golden on top (30-40 minutes). Serve hot. ●

## MORE SOUPS ONLINE



It's soup season and we've got a collection of 30 of our all-time favourite winter warmers online: [gourmettraveller.com.au](http://gourmettraveller.com.au)



### BREAD AND CABBAGE SOUP

Casserole from Le Creuset. Porcelain bowl (with spoons) from Koskela. Cutipol spoons from Francalia.

### CHICKPEA SOUP

RG Tapas deep saltbush bowl from Chef and the

Cook. Cutipol spoon from Francalia. Dine linen napkin from Citta Design. Norm Architects "Menu Flip Around" chair from Funkis. All other props stylist's own. Stockists p183.

Bread and cabbage soup with Fontina and thyme



**DUCK** White plate from MH Ceramics. **MUD** **CRAB** Bowl from Slab + Slub. Holm pourer from Country Road. Napkin from Ondene. All other props stylist's own. Stockists p183.

### Duck rendang

(RECIPE P126)



# CURRY *favour*

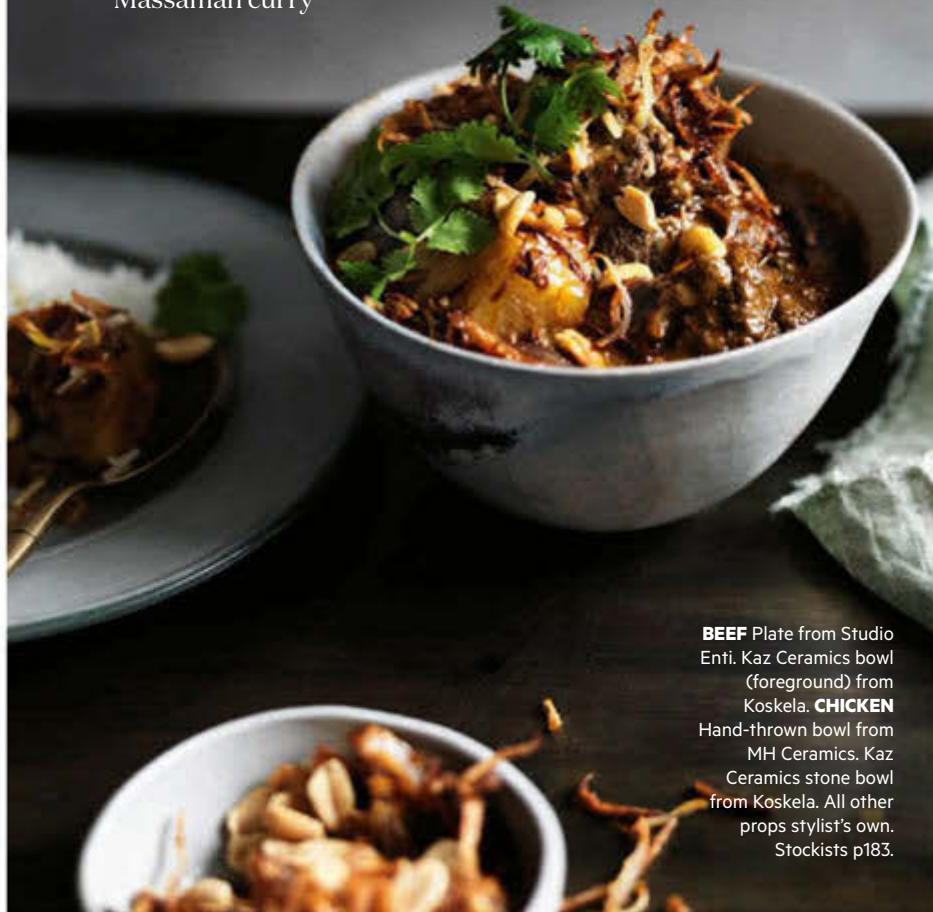
Whether it's a mellow lamb korma enriched with almonds, a tangy tamarind-laced barramundi number or a coconut-charged duck rendang, curries bring spice to your life.

RECIPES & FOOD STYLING LISA FEATHERBY PHOTOGRAPHY WILLIAM MEPPEM  
STYLING GERALDINE MUÑOZ FOOD ASSISTANT CHARLOTTE BINNS-McDONALD  
DRINK SUGGESTIONS MAX ALLEN



Mud-crab curry (RECIPE P126)

## Beef and potato Massaman curry



**BEEF** Plate from Studio Enti. Kaz Ceramics bowl (foreground) from Koskela. **CHICKEN** Hand-thrown bowl from MH Ceramics. Kaz Ceramics stone bowl from Koskela. All other props stylist's own. Stockists p183.

### Beef and potato Massaman curry

This makes a big batch, so if you don't have an extra-large saucepan, halve the recipe. It keeps well refrigerated for several days and also freezes well.

**Prep time 30 mins, cook 4 hrs (plus soaking)**

Serves 8

- 3 dried bay leaves
- 1 piece cassia bark
- 1 tbsp peanut oil
- 1 boneless beef shin (about 1kg), cut into 6cm pieces (see note)
- 270 ml coconut cream (see note)
- 1.8 litres coconut milk
- 500 gm Desiree potatoes (about 3), peeled and cut into 5cm pieces
- 50 gm soft light palm sugar, or to taste
- 50 ml fish sauce, or to taste
- 2 tbsp tamarind extract, or to taste (see note)
- Coriander, julienned ginger and steamed jasmine rice, to serve
- Massaman curry paste**
- 22 gm dried long red chillies, broken up and soaked in hot water for 2 hours
- 1 tbsp coriander seeds
- 3 tsp cumin seeds
- ½ tsp cardamom seeds
- 6 cloves
- 45 gm (⅓ cup) roasted peanuts, plus extra to serve

- 4 large red shallots, coarsely chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, coarsely chopped

#### Fried shallots

- Vegetable oil, for shallow-frying
- 6 large red shallots, thinly sliced

- 1 For curry paste, drain and chop chillies, and set aside. Dry-roast spices until fragrant (30-40 seconds; see cook's notes p184), cool briefly, then pound to a powder with a large mortar and pestle. Add remaining ingredients in batches and pound to a coarse paste, then combine batches and pound until smooth (you can also do this in a small food processor, adding 2 tbsp water to help process to a smooth paste).
- 2 Dry-roast bay leaves and cassia bark in a small frying pan until fragrant (20-30 seconds; see cook's notes p184). Set aside.
- 3 Heat oil in an extra-large saucepan over medium-high heat, add beef in batches and brown all over (1-2 minutes each side). Transfer to a plate, rinse pan out, then return to medium-high heat, add half the coconut cream and cook, stirring occasionally, until it cracks and the fat separates (4-5 minutes). Add curry paste, bay leaves and cassia bark, and stir-fry until fragrant and curry paste is toasted (1-2 minutes; this may take longer if water has been added to make the paste). Add coconut milk, remaining coconut cream and 250ml water and bring to a simmer. Return beef to pan,

reduce heat to low-medium and simmer uncovered until beef is tender and sauce reduces to just cover beef (3½-4 hours; if sauce reduces too much, add a little more water half a cup at a time to keep beef just covered without diluting the sauce too much). Add potato and simmer until beef is very tender and potatoes are soft (20-30 minutes). Season curry to taste with palm sugar, fish sauce and tamarind in the last few minutes of cooking for a balance of salty, sweet and sour.

4 Meanwhile, for fried shallots, heat oil in a wok over medium heat to 180C or until it shimmers. Add shallots and fry, stirring occasionally, until golden and crisp (1-2 minutes). Remove with a slotted spoon and drain on paper towels.

5 Scatter curry with coriander, julienned ginger and fried shallots, and serve with steamed jasmine rice.

**Note** Boneless beef shin needs to be ordered from your butcher, or substitute osso buco, increasing the quantity to account for the bones. Use coconut cream without thickeners or it won't crack – that is, the fat won't separate. Tamarind extract is best made fresh. To make 80ml extract, combine 1 tbsp tamarind pulp with 100ml hot water, and stand until pulp softens. Break up the pulp in the water with the back of a spoon and strain through a coarse sieve.

**Drink suggestion** Rich, black chocolate stout.

### Curry chicken noodle soup

*This is the Burmese-style curry noodle soup called ohn no khao swè, close kin to the khao soi found just over the border in northern Thailand. Fried garlic and oil flavour the Burmese version, while the Thai version has more condiments added, such as pickled mustard greens and red shallots. Chickpea flour, also known as besan, is used to thicken soups after cooking in Burmese cuisine; it's available at some delicatessens and Indian grocers.*

**Prep time 40 mins, cook 1 hr 40 mins (plus soaking)**

Serves 4-6

- 1 chicken (about 1.5kg)
- 6 gm dried long red chillies, broken up and soaked in hot water for 2 hours
- 1 tsp coriander seeds
- 35 gm ginger, coarsely chopped
- 4 large golden shallots, peeled and chopped
- 4 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- ½ tbsp medium-hot curry powder (such as Madras)
- ½ tsp chilli powder, or to taste
- 800 ml coconut milk
- 2 tbsp fish sauce, or to taste
- 1-2 tbsp tamarind extract, or to taste (see note in recipe at left)
- 2-3 eggs, at room temperature
- 500 gm medium fresh egg noodles
- Roasted chilli powder and besan flour, to serve
- Deep-fried garlic**
- 60 ml (¼ cup) vegetable oil
- 8 garlic cloves, thinly sliced on a mandolin>

HOT  
TIP

If you're short on time, a quick way to rehydrate dried chillies is to break them up into a saucepan of water and simmer them for 20-odd minutes.



Curry chicken  
noodle soup

MORE CURRIES  
ONLINE

From Jamaican goat curry to kofte and Sri Lankan fish curry with coconut sambal, we've got more curry recipes online:  
[gourmettraveller.com.au](http://gourmettraveller.com.au)

- Remove wing tips from chicken, then remove breasts from carcass with winglets attached. Halve breasts crossways. Remove legs and halve through the joint. Refrigerate legs and breasts until required, removing from fridge 5 minutes before cooking. Place chicken carcass in a large saucepan and cover with 4 litres water. Bring to the boil, then reduce heat and simmer uncovered until stock is well flavoured (1-1½ hours). Strain stock, reserving 400ml stock to use in curry (remaining stock can be frozen for up to 3 months).
- For curry paste, drain and chop chillies and set aside. Dry-roast coriander seeds until fragrant (10-20 seconds; see cook's notes p184). Cool briefly, then pound to a powder with a mortar and pestle. Add ginger, shallots, garlic, chillies and a pinch of salt and pound to a smooth paste (you can also do this in a small food processor, adding 2 tbsp water to help process to a smooth paste).
- Fry curry paste in oil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat until mixture starts to caramelise (2-4 minutes; this may take longer if water was added to make the paste). Add curry powder and chilli powder to taste, stir until fragrant (1 minute), then add coconut milk and reserved stock and bring to the boil. Reduce heat to low, add chicken and simmer uncovered until cooked through and juices run clear when pierced with a skewer (15-18 minutes). Season to taste with fish sauce and tamarind for a balance of salty and sour, and keep warm.
- Meanwhile, for deep-fried garlic, heat oil in a small saucepan until it starts to shimmer. Add garlic and fry, stirring occasionally, until golden brown (1-2 minutes). Remove immediately with a slotted spoon and drain on paper towels. Reserve oil.
- Boil eggs in a small saucepan of boiling water over high heat until cooked to your liking (8 minutes for medium-boiled). Refresh eggs in cold water and set aside. Peel and halve just before serving.
- Cook noodles in a large saucepan of boiling water until al dente (5-7 minutes). Drain well, then divide among warm serving bowls.
- Ladle curry soup and chicken over noodles, top with fried garlic, a drizzle of garlic oil, half a boiled egg and roasted chilli powder, and serve with chickpea flour.

**Drink suggestion** Strong saison ale.

### Duck rendang

*This duck curry is cooked in a chilli-coconut sauce with fragrant lemongrass. Cucumber pickles, coriander and roti all make great accompaniments.*

**Prep time 30 mins, cook 2 hrs (plus soaking)**

**Serves 4 (pictured p122)**

- duck breasts (150gm each), halved crossways
- duck Marylands (300gm each), halved through the joint
- each dried long red chillies and dried small red chillies, broken up and soaked in hot water for 2 hours
- small onion, coarsely chopped
- gm ginger, coarsely chopped
- gm galangal, finely chopped
- garlic cloves, coarsely chopped
- lemongrass stalks (white part only), coarsely chopped, green ends reserved
- gm fresh turmeric, coarsely chopped
- tsp roasted shrimp paste (see note)
- ml (¼ cup) vegetable oil
- ml (2 cups) coconut milk
- tsp finely grated palm sugar, or to taste

Lime juice, for seasoning  
Steamed long-grain rice, to serve

**1** Heat a large non-stick deep frying pan over medium-high heat. Add duck in batches, skin-side down and fry without turning until fat renders and skin is golden brown (2-4 minutes). Set aside, reserving 1 tbsp fat in pan.

**2** For curry paste, drain and chop chillies, then combine with onion, ginger, galangal, garlic, lemongrass, turmeric, shrimp paste and oil in a small food processor or blender and process to a coarse paste.

**3** Heat reserved fat over medium heat, add curry paste and fry until colour deepens and onion becomes fragrant (8-10 minutes). Add coconut milk and 375ml water, bring to a simmer over high heat, then add duck and lemongrass ends, and bring back to a simmer. Reduce heat to low and simmer covered with a lid for 30 minutes, then remove lid and stir occasionally until duck is very tender and sauce is thick and deepened in colour (1½-1¾ hours; curry will release fat as it cooks – you can spoon this off as you go, but leave a little for the sauce to fry as it reduces). Add palm sugar and stir until dissolved (1-2 minutes). Season well with salt and lime juice and serve curry with steamed rice.

**Note** Roasted shrimp paste is available from Asian grocers; to roast it yourself, wrap shrimp paste in foil and roast in a moderate oven until pungent (5-10 minutes).

**Drink suggestion** Fragrant, hoppy India pale ale.

### Mud-crab curry

*This curry is light and easy to prepare, and crab always goes down a treat. If you're averse to dispatching your own crab, buy a cooked one and skip the second step.*

**Prep time 30 mins, cook 20 mins**

**(plus freezing, soaking)**

**Serves 4 (pictured p123)**

- live mud crabs (about 900gm each)
- tbsp peanut oil
- ml coconut milk
- long red chillies, halved lengthways
- tbsp fish sauce
- kaffir lime leaves, torn, plus extra julienned to serve

Julienned ginger, Thai basil leaves and steamed jasmine rice, to serve

**Curry paste**

- small dried red chillies, broken up and soaked in hot water for 2 hours
- tsp each coriander seeds and black peppercorns
- gm fresh turmeric, coarsely chopped
- garlic cloves, coarsely chopped
- gm galangal, coarsely chopped
- lemongrass stalk, white part only, coarsely chopped
- red shallot, coarsely chopped
- tsp roasted shrimp paste (see note at left)

Finely grated rind of 1 kaffir lime

**1** For curry paste, drain and chop chillies, and dry-roast whole spices until fragrant (15-20 seconds; see cook's notes p184). Cool briefly, then crush with a mortar and pestle. Add turmeric, garlic, galangal, lemongrass and a pinch of salt and pound to a coarse paste. Add shallot, shrimp paste, rind and chillies, and pound until smooth. Curry paste will keep frozen for 3 weeks.

**2** Wash and despatch mud crabs humanely (see cook's notes p184). Bring a large stockpot of salted water to the boil, drop in crabs and cook until they turn pink (13-14 minutes; pull a claw free and if the meat is still translucent, cook a little longer). Drain and set aside to cool briefly (about 10 minutes), then lift flap underneath the crab and pull off back shell. Discard gills and clean out yellow-brown tomalley. Cut crabs into quarters with a large sharp knife, then crack claws with the back of a knife and refrigerate until required.

**3** Heat oil in a large wok until hot. Add curry paste and stir until fragrant (10-20 seconds). Add coconut milk and bring to the boil, then add chillies, fish sauce and kaffir lime leaves, and simmer until well flavoured (2-4 minutes). Add crab and turn crab over in the sauce until warmed through (2-4 minutes). Scatter with ginger, Thai basil and extra kaffir lime and serve with steamed jasmine rice.

**Wine suggestion** Dry but full-bodied and fruity rosé.



**CHANA DAL** Hand-thrown bowl (with dhal) from The Forty Nine Studio. All other props stylist's own. Stockists p183. **TEXT PAGE** All props stylist's own.

## Roti with chana dhal

We've made this curry to have as a dipping sauce with roti, but it could also be served as a meal with rice.

Start this recipe a day ahead to make the roti.

**Prep time 40 mins, cook 1 hr 15 mins  
(plus resting)**

**Serves 6-8 as an appetiser with roti**

500 gm (3½ cups) plain flour

300 gm coconut oil, melted and cooled to room temperature

2 tbsp softened butter

Small green chillies, to serve (optional; see note)

### Chana dhal

3 tsp each cumin and coriander seeds

1 tsp yellow mustard seeds

3 tsp garam masala

1 tsp ground turmeric

2 tbsp ghee

1 onion, finely chopped

35 gm ginger, finely pounded with a mortar and pestle

1 garlic clove, finely pounded with a mortar and pestle

3 vine-ripened tomatoes, coarsely chopped and puréed in a blender

600 ml coconut milk

250 gm split chickpeas or yellow split peas, rinsed well

3-4 small green chillies, finely chopped

4 fresh curry leaves, plus extra to serve

Lime juice, to taste

**1** For the roti, combine flour, 300ml water and 3 tsp salt in a bowl and knead to form a soft dough, then turn out onto a lightly floured work surface and knead until smooth and elastic.

Divide dough into 10 balls and place in a single snug layer in a lightly greased baking dish or plastic container. Pour coconut oil over, dot with butter and rest covered in a cool place overnight.

**2** For chana dhal, dry-roast whole spices until fragrant (10-20 seconds; see cook's notes p184). Cool briefly, then pound with a mortar and pestle until finely ground and stir in garam masala and turmeric. Heat ghee in a saucepan over medium-high heat. Add onion and sauté until very tender and starting to caramelise (10-12 minutes). Add ginger, garlic and pounded spice mix, and stir until fragrant (20-30 seconds). Add puréed tomato, coconut milk, split chickpeas or peas, chillies and curry leaves, bring to a simmer, then reduce heat to medium and simmer uncovered, stirring occasionally, until split peas start to break down and dhal is thick (1-1½ hours). Season to taste with lime juice and salt.

**3** Preheat oven to 90C or lowest setting. Working with a ball of dough at a time, press into a flat 20cm disc, then stretch dough as thin as you can



Roti with chana dhal

get by pulling it out very gently with your hands until it's quite transparent (about 37cm diameter). Fold one side over a third, trapping air as you go, then repeat with the other side. Fold ends up in the same way to give you a large rough square of even layers. Heat a non-stick frying pan over medium heat, add roti in batches and fry, turning once, until golden and crisp (1-2 minutes each side). Keep warm in oven while you cook the rest. Serve roti warm with warm chana dhal scattered with curry leaves and chillies to the side.

**Note** Serve small green chillies either whole or coarsely chopped alongside curry for extra heat.

**Drink suggestion** Cloudy farmhouse scrumpy >

HOT  
TIP

Only use the freshest spices when you're making curries because they lose potency over time, which will give you a dull curry.



Sour curry of barramundi



Lamb korma



**TABLE SPREAD** Large grey Brooke Thorn platter (under barramundi dish) from Koskela. Grey dinner plate (bottom left corner) from Studio Enti. Bronze round platter from Koskela. Varn tumbler from Country Road. Copper bowl from Koskela. All other props stylist's own. Stockists p183.

## Sour curry of barramundi

This South East Asian-style curry has a tangy sour flavour from tamarind and amchur, dried green mango powder. The use of a little stock makes it quite a light curry and the flavour of the fish really shines.

**Prep time 30 mins, cook 20 mins**

**Serves 4-6**

- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 60 ml (1/4 cup) vegetable oil
- 40 gm (1/4 cup) finely grated fresh coconut
- 2 tsp amchur (see note)
- 2 sprigs fresh curry leaves, plus extra to serve
- 375 ml (1 1/2 cups) fish or chicken stock, or water
- 1 small piece cassia bark
- 4 barramundi fillets (180gm each), skin on
- 2 1/2 tbsp tamarind extract (see note on p124), or to taste
- Lime juice for seasoning, plus extra wedges to serve
- Small green chillies and steamed basmati or long-grain rice, to serve

### Spice paste

- 1 tsp each coriander and cumin seeds
- 1/2 tsp each fennel seeds and fenugreek seeds
- 1/4 tsp each black peppercorns, cloves and cardamom seeds
- 35 gm ginger, coarsely chopped
- 10 gm fresh turmeric, coarsely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, coarsely chopped
- 1 lemongrass, white part only, finely chopped
- 1 tsp each paprika and ground Kashmiri chilli (see note)

**1** For spice paste, dry-roast whole spices until fragrant (1-2 minutes; see cook's notes p184). Cool briefly, then pound with a mortar and pestle until finely ground, add remaining ingredients and a pinch of salt, and pound to a smooth paste.

**2** Sauté onion in oil in a wok over high heat until tender and starting to caramelise (8-10 minutes). Add spice paste and stir until fragrant and toasted (1-2 minutes). Add coconut, amchur and curry leaves, stir to combine, then add stock and cassia bark, and season well with salt. Bring to the boil, add fish, reduce heat to low and simmer, turning occasionally, until fish flakes easily (4-6 minutes). Season to taste with tamarind, lime and salt, and serve with rice, chillies and lime wedges.

**Note** Amchur and ground Kashmiri chilli are available from Indian grocers and online from [herbies.com.au](http://herbies.com.au).

**Wine suggestion** Off-dry fragrant riesling.

## Lamb korma

Korma curry came about during the Mughul Empire in India. It's usually a mild curry, although some versions include Kashmiri chilli to add a little heat, which we've done here. Our version starts with chaunk, a mixture of onions, ginger and spices slowly cooked in ghee, and we finish the dish with a paste made with almonds, coconut flesh and poppy seeds to flavour and thicken the gravy. We've used lamb neck here for its full flavour and served it with lacha, a raw onion salad, for a nice clean lift to the dish.

**Prep time 40 mins, cook 2 hrs 45 mins**

**Serves 6-8**

- 100 ml ghee
- 1.6 kg lamb neck, cut into 7cm pieces
- 1 1/2 onions, finely chopped
- 80 gm ginger, coarsely chopped
- 5 garlic cloves, coarsely chopped
- 1 piece cassia bark
- 1 1/2 tbsp garam masala
- 1 tbsp ground ginger
- 1 tbsp each coriander and cumin seeds, coarsely ground
- 2-3 tsp ground Kashmiri chilli, or to taste (see note at left)
- 1 tsp ground turmeric
- 200 gm plain yoghurt, plus extra to serve
- Diced cucumber, to serve
- Curry leaves (optional), to serve

### Nut paste

- 60 gm blanched almonds
- 50 gm finely grated coconut flesh
- 3 tsp white poppy seeds

### Pilau

- 2 tbsp ghee
- 4 golden shallots, thinly sliced
- 6 fresh curry leaves
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 4 cardamom pods, bruised
- 1 piece cassia bark
- Large pinch of saffron threads

- 400 gm basmati rice, rinsed

- 750 ml (3 cups) chicken stock

### Onion lacha

- 1 Spanish onion, diced
- Juice of 1 lime

- 3-4 small green chillies, or to taste

**1** Heat 1 tbsp ghee in a large wide saucepan over high heat. Season lamb neck well, then add to pan in batches and brown all over (5-7 minutes). Transfer to a plate.

**2** Process onion, ginger and garlic in a food processor until finely chopped. Heat remaining ghee in the pan over medium heat, add onion mixture and cassia, and stir until very tender and starting to caramelise (20-25 minutes). Increase heat to high, add spices and stir continuously until fragrant (3-4 minutes). Return lamb to pan, stir to coat and add 1 litre water, season to taste and bring to a simmer. Reduce heat to low and simmer half-covered with a lid, stirring occasionally, until lamb is very tender and sauce is reduced to just cover meat (2-2 1/4 hours; add a splash of water if necessary during cooking). Remove lamb and set aside loosely covered with foil to keep warm.

**3** For nut paste, meanwhile, preheat oven to 180C and roast almonds on an oven tray until toasted and golden (10-12 minutes). Cool briefly, then pound with a mortar and pestle with coconut flesh and poppy seeds until smooth, adding 2-3 tbsp of oil from the lamb sauce one at a time to help form a paste. Add to lamb with yoghurt, season well to taste and stir occasionally over a very low heat until sauce is thickened (20-30 minutes).

**4** Meanwhile, for pilau, heat ghee in a large ovenproof saucepan over medium-high heat, add shallots and stir until fragrant and golden (about 5 minutes), then add curry leaves, garlic and spices, and stir until fragrant (1 minute). Add rice and stir until well combined (1 minute), add chicken stock and bring to a simmer, stirring occasionally, then cover with a lid, transfer to oven and bake until rice is tender and liquid is absorbed (15-20 minutes).

**5** For onion lacha, toss onion, lime juice, chillies and a large pinch each of salt and ground white pepper in a bowl and set aside for flavours to develop (2 minutes).

**6** Scatter korma with extra curry leaves and serve with pilau, onion lacha and yoghurt topped with cucumber and ground black pepper to taste.

**Wine suggestion** Full-bodied traditional Aussie shiraz cabernet blend. ●



# POPULAR culture

In a magical transformation, fermentation brings layers of flavour and depth to all manner of preparations, from batter for dosai to pickles, sauces and puddings.

RECIPES ALICE STOREY PHOTOGRAPHY WILLIAM MEPPEM

STYLING EMMA KNOWLES

MERCHANDISING JERIE-JOY REDMAN-LLOYD

DRINK SUGGESTIONS MAX ALLEN



### JAPANESE CURRY

Robert Gordon plate from Chef and the Cook. Jar from West Elm. Marble bowl from Koskela. **FRIED RICE** Bowl (on top) from Golden Brown

Fox ceramics. Bowl (bottom) from Mud Australia. Copper hooks and saucepan from Koskela. All other props stylist's own. Stockists p183.



Japanese-style onion pickles  
with crumbed pork and  
curry (RECIPE P135)



## Khao pad naem

This Thai-style fried rice is simple home-cooking at its best and the fermented component, Thai fermented pork sausage, is bought in – it couldn't be simpler.

**Prep time 20 mins, cook 15 mins**

**Serves 4 (pictured p130)**

2	tbsp vegetable or peanut oil
180	gm naem (Thai fermented pork sausage; about 4 small), cut into 1cm pieces (see note)
5	garlic cloves, finely chopped
2	birdseye chillies, thinly sliced
1	white onion, finely chopped
500	gm cooked long-grain rice
2	tbsp fish sauce, plus extra to taste
1	tbsp soy sauce
2	tsp caster sugar
2	eggs, lightly beaten
4	spring onions, thinly sliced
1	cup (loosely packed) coriander, coarsely chopped
2	Lebanese cucumbers, thickly sliced
	Roasted peanuts, lime wedges and Sriracha sauce, to serve

**1** Heat oil in a large wok over high heat until smoking. Add naem, garlic, chilli and onion, and stir-fry until fragrant and golden (4–5 minutes). Add rice, stir-fry until heated through (1–2 minutes), then add half the fish sauce, soy sauce, sugar and ¼ tsp freshly ground white pepper, stir, then push rice to one side of wok. Combine eggs with remaining fish sauce in a small bowl, pour into wok and stir occasionally until just set (1–2 minutes). Stir cooked egg through rice and stir-fry until rice is golden (4–5 minutes). Season to taste with extra fish sauce if necessary, then serve hot topped with spring onions, coriander, cucumber and roasted peanuts, and with lime wedges and Sriracha sauce.

**Note** Thai fermented pork sausage is available from select Asian grocers.

**Drink suggestion** Cold, crisp pilsner-style lager.

## Grilled flank steak with fermented green chilli sauce

For the sauce you need fermented vegetable liquid; we use the liquid from Peace Love sauerkraut or Life in a Jar vegetables, available at health-food shops and delicatessens. Start this recipe at least five days ahead to ferment the chilli mixture.

**Prep time 20 mins, cook 15 mins**

**(plus fermenting)**

**Serves 4–6**

2	tsp cumin seeds, dry-roasted (see cook's notes p184)
1	tsp whole black peppercorns
6	garlic cloves, finely chopped
¼	cup (loosely packed) oregano
1	tbsp dried oregano
125	ml (½ cup) olive oil
2	tbsp red wine vinegar
1	kg flank steak, trimmed, cut into thin strips
3	white onions, thickly sliced into rounds
4	light-green banana chillies
	<b>Fermented green chilli sauce</b>
600	gm long green chillies, halved lengthways
6	garlic cloves, coarsely chopped
2	spring onions, coarsely chopped
60	ml (¼ cup) fermented vegetable liquid
2½	tbsp raw caster sugar
2	tbsp finely grated ginger
150	gm drained canned tomatillos, coarsely chopped
½	cup (loosely packed) coriander, coarsely chopped
	Juice of 1 lime or to taste
2	tbsp olive oil

**1** For fermented green chilli sauce, discard seeds from half the chillies, then coarsely chop. Add to food processor with garlic, spring onions, vegetable liquid, 2 tbsp caster sugar, ginger and 1 tbsp fine sea salt flakes, process until finely chopped, then transfer to a sterile 1-litre jar. Tap jar gently on the bench to remove air

bubbles, cover with lid, but do not seal and set aside at room temperature to ferment (3–5 days, depending on climate). Stir with a sterile spoon every day, wiping sides of the jar with a clean paper towel. The chilli sauce will be ready when there are small bubbles in the jar and it has a slightly fermented smell. Seal lid and refrigerate for up to a month. Makes about 600ml.

**2** Crush cumin seeds, peppercorns and 2 tsp salt with a mortar and pestle. Add garlic, oregano, and dried oregano, pound to a paste, then stir in 80ml olive oil and vinegar. Place flank steak in a large container or bowl, add marinade, toss to coat and refrigerate to marinate (8 hours to overnight).

**3** Combine 125ml fermented green chilli sauce, tomatillos, coriander, lime juice, olive oil and remaining sugar in a bowl and season to taste.

**4** Preheat a char-grill or barbecue to medium-high. Thread steak onto large skewers and set aside. Brush onions and banana chillies with remaining olive oil and grill, turning occasionally, until charred and tender (8–10 minutes).

**5** Char-grill steak, turning occasionally, until charred and cooked to your liking (4–5 minutes for medium-rare). Set aside to rest (5 minutes), then serve with fermented green-chilli sauce and char-grilled onions and banana chillies.

**Wine suggestion** Juicy young cabernet franc.



## PICKLES ONLINE

We've got a pack of pickle recipes online, with mains like Malaysian pickled chicken and sides such as pickled ginger and cabbage salad: [gourmettraveller.com.au](http://gourmettraveller.com.au)

**BEEF** Bowl from Mud Australia. Dish (with peppers) from The Bay Tree. Measuring cups from Williams-Sonoma. **TEXT PAGE** Jar (with onions) from Williams-Sonoma. All other props stylist's own. Stockists p183.



Grilled flank steak with  
fermented green chilli sauce

**PIZZA** Plate at front from The DEA Store.  
Kaz Ceramics dish (with chilli oil) from Koskela.  
Spoon from The Bay Tree. **TEXT PAGE** Dish from The Bay Tree.  
All other props stylist's own. Stockists p183.



Pizze fritte with onions,  
ricotta and chilli oil



## Pizze fritte with onions, ricotta and chilli oil

The pizza dough here is fermented overnight to give it a delicious sour note, so start this recipe a day ahead.

**Prep time 50 mins, cook 1 hr 15 mins  
(plus fermenting, proving)**

Makes 12

- 1 tbsp dried yeast
- 780 gm bread flour
- 80 ml (1/3 cup) olive oil, plus extra for shallow-frying
- 1 tsp caster sugar
- 2 onions, thinly sliced
- 4 salad onions, thinly sliced
- 2 white onions, thinly sliced
- 4 golden shallots, thinly sliced
- 2 tbsp red wine vinegar
- 1 tbsp rosemary, finely chopped, plus extra, to serve
- Semolina, for dusting
- 250 gm firm ricotta, crumbled
- 60 gm thinly sliced salami (about 24 slices)
- 60 gm parmesan, finely grated
- Finely grated rind of 1 lemon
- Chilli oil**
- 180 ml extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 long red chilli, thinly sliced

**1** Stir 425ml water and yeast in an electric mixer, stir in 380gm flour, then cover with plastic wrap and leave to prove until bubbly (1½ hours). Add 180ml room-temperature water, 1 tbsp oil, sugar, 1½ tbsp fine sea salt flakes and remaining flour, and knead with a dough hook until a smooth,

soft dough forms (8-10 minutes; add extra flour if too sticky). Transfer to a lightly oiled bowl, cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate to ferment until doubles in size (12 hours or overnight).

**2** For chilli oil, combine ingredients in a small bowl and set aside for 4-5 hours to steep.

**3** Heat oil remaining in a saucepan over medium heat, add onions and shallots and sauté until starting to soften (5-6 minutes), then cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until tender (25-30 minutes). Uncover and stir occasionally until onions are dark golden (10-12 minutes), then add vinegar and rosemary and season to taste.

**4** Divide dough into 12 pieces. Line a baking tray with baking paper and scatter with semolina. Roll each piece of dough on a lightly floured surface to a 14cm round, then transfer to prepared tray.

**5** Preheat grill to high. Heat oil for shallow-frying in a large frying pan over medium-high heat until hot and fry pizza bases in batches, turning once, until golden and cooked through (3-4 minutes), then transfer to a tray. Spread bases with onion mixture, scatter ricotta over, then grill until golden (2-3 minutes). Top with salami, parmesan and lemon rind, drizzle with chilli oil, scatter with rosemary and serve hot.

**Wine suggestion** Dry sparkling red lambrusco.

## Japanese-style onion pickles with crumbed pork and curry

Curry, or "kare", is a big favourite in Japan. This combination of curry, fried golden pork and punchy pickles hits the spot – just add cold beer. Start this recipe at least 10 days ahead to make the pickles.

**Prep time 45 mins, cook 30 mins  
(plus fermenting, marinating)**

Serves 4 (pictured p131)

- 2 garlic cloves, grated
- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 tbsp mirin
- 350 gm pork shoulder, thinly sliced
- Seasoned plain flour, for dipping
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 200 gm (2 cups) panko crumbs
- Vegetable oil, for deep-frying
- Steamed rice, and blanched carrots and peas, to serve

### Japanese-style onion pickles

- 10 salad onions, trimmed and halved
- 25 gm sea salt flakes
- 200 ml white wine vinegar
- 200 gm caster sugar
- 1 long red chilli, split lengthways
- Japanese curry**
- 2 tbsp peanut oil
- 1 onion, thinly sliced
- 1 tbsp finely grated ginger
- 5 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 1½ tbsp curry powder
- 2 tbsp plain flour
- 600 ml chicken stock
- 40 ml soy sauce

- ½ tbsp brown sugar
- 2 tsp rice wine vinegar
- ½ tsp garam masala

**1** For pickles, toss onions and salt in a bowl. Transfer to a container that holds them snugly, cover with baking paper, then weight with a heavy plate and set aside for 24 hours to release some of their juice. Remove weight and set aside covered with a lid to ferment (3-5 days), stirring once each day. Onions will be fermented when translucent and slightly softened. Rinse briefly under cold running water and pat dry with paper towels. Combine vinegar, 400ml water, sugar and chilli in a saucepan over medium heat, stir until sugar dissolves and set aside to cool. Layer onions into a 1-litre jar, pour liquid over, seal and refrigerate for 5 days to infuse. Pickled onions will keep refrigerated for 6 weeks.

**2** For pork, combine garlic, soy and mirin in a bowl, add pork and toss to coat. Transfer to a container and marinate for 8 hours or overnight. Dust pork in seasoned flour, dip in egg, then press into panko crumbs to coat both sides, shaking off excess in between each dipping. Place on a tray lined with baking paper, cover and refrigerate until required.

**3** For curry, heat peanut oil in a saucepan over medium-high heat and sauté onion until tender (5-7 minutes), then add ginger and garlic and sauté until soft (1-2 minutes). Add curry powder, stir until fragrant, then stir in flour and cook until sand-coloured (1-2 minutes). Gradually whisk in stock, then add soy sauce and sugar, and simmer, whisking occasionally, for flavours to develop (8-10 minutes). Stir in vinegar and garam masala, and keep warm.

**4** Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium heat to 180C. Fry crumbed pork in batches, turning occasionally, until cooked through (2-3 minutes). Drain on paper towels and serve with curry, rice, carrots, peas and onion pickles.

**Wine suggestion** The yeasty, briny tang of a good fino Sherry.

## HOT TIP

Japanese curry powders tend to be sweet and aromatic rather than hot and savoury; if you can't lay hands on a Japanese blend, try Madras, or a turmeric-rich British curry powder.

**LABNE** Bowl with labne Kaz Morton ceramics from Koskela.  
**DOSAI** White plates from The DEA Store.  
Enamel jug from Koskela.  
All other props stylist's own. Stockists p183.



Overnight Afghan bread with labne and black garlic (RECIPE P138)

Black garlic is an example of an ingredient getting even better with age, developing a *sweet, mellow* flavour.

Dosai with spiced potatoes and tamarind chutney (RECIPE P138)



## Dosai with spiced potatoes and tamarind chutney

Dosai are traditionally cooked in a flat heavy pan called a tawa. Rubbing it with a cut onion is said to make the pan non-stick. A non-stick frying pan or crêpe pan is a reliable alternative. Start this recipe two days ahead to soak the grains and ferment the batter.

**Prep time 35 mins, cook 1 hr 5 mins**

(plus soaking, fermenting)

Serves 8 (pictured p137)

450 gm (2½ cups) long-grain rice

105 gm (½ cup) urid dhal

½ tbsp fenugreek seeds

80 ml (½ cup) melted ghee

Grated coconut, thinly sliced long green chilli, mint and ground chilli, to serve

### Tamarind chutney

160 gm tamarind pulp

½ tsp cumin seeds, crushed

1 tsp vegetable oil

½ tsp ground ginger

¼ tsp ground chilli

110 gm (½ cup) light palm sugar

### Spiced potatoes

800 gm (about 6 small) Dutch cream potatoes, cut into 3cm pieces

60 ml (¼ cup) vegetable oil

½ onion, finely chopped

2 tbsp finely grated ginger

2 garlic cloves, finely chopped

5 fresh curry leaves

1 tsp mustard seeds

1 tsp ground coriander

¼ tsp turmeric

½ cup (loosely packed) coriander, coarsely chopped

1 long green chilli, finely chopped

**1** Rinse rice under cold running water, then place in a large container, cover with cold water and soak for 10 hours or overnight.

**2** Preheat oven to 120C. Rinse dhal under cold running water until the water runs clear, then soak in cold water with fenugreek for 1 hour. Drain and process in a food processor with 100ml water until smooth (2 minutes), then transfer to a large bowl. Drain rice and process in a food processor with 125ml water until smooth, but still a little grainy. Add to dhal with 150ml water, stir to combine, then cover with foil and place in oven with heat turned off to ferment (12-24 hours; the batter is fermented when bubbly and thick, with a slight fermented smell). Remove from oven, stir in 1½ tsp sea salt flakes and set aside in a warm place to continue fermenting (8-10 hours).

**3** For tamarind chutney, soak tamarind pulp in 300ml water in a bowl to soften (5 hours). Strain, reserving pulp and liquid, then push pulp through a sieve and combine with half the liquid (discard remaining liquid) in a bowl. Dry-roast cumin seeds (see cook's notes p184), add oil, ginger and chilli to the pan, stir to combine, then add tamarind and simmer, stirring occasionally, until slightly reduced (2-3 minutes). Add palm sugar, season to taste, stir until thick (5-7 minutes) and allow to cool.

**4** For spiced potatoes, cook potatoes in a saucepan of simmering salted water until tender

Rice pudding meets brûlée here, with the subtle tang of crème fraîche making a **pleasing foil** to the richness.

(25-30 minutes), then drain well and set aside. Heat oil in a large frying pan, add onion, ginger, garlic and curry leaves, cook until onion is soft (7-8 minutes), then add spices and stir until fragrant. Add potatoes and 80ml water, cover and simmer for flavours to combine and potatoes are very soft (3-5 minutes). Stir in coriander and green chilli and season to taste.

**5** Heat ½ tbsp ghee in a large non-stick frying pan over medium-high heat. Pour in enough batter to thinly cover the base when swirled (the batter should be a thin pancake consistency; add a little water if it's too thick) or use the base of a ladle working in a spiral motion from the centre to the edges for a thinner spread, and cook dosa, turning once, until golden and crisp (2-3 minutes each side). Wipe out pan with paper towels and repeat with remaining ghee and batter. Top dosai with spiced potatoes, coconut, green chilli, mint and ground chilli, and serve with tamarind chutney.

**Drink suggestion** Nutty, malty pale ale.

## Overnight Afghan bread with labne and black garlic

*Black garlic, the fermented component in this recipe, is garlic that has been aged for a month to produce an earthy flavour. Start this recipe a day ahead to make the labne.*

**Prep time 45 mins, cook 20 mins**

(plus fermenting, cooling)

Serves 8 as a snack (pictured p136)

500 gm Greek-style yoghurt

Extra-virgin olive oil and baby radish or cress, to serve

1 head black fermented garlic (see note)

### Overnight Afghan bread

½ tsp dried yeast

500 gm bread flour

½ tbsp nigella seeds

1 tsp onion flakes

**1** For labne, combine yoghurt and 2 tsp sea salt flakes in a bowl. Spoon into a sieve lined with muslin over a bowl, cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate until thick and liquid drains (12 hours or overnight). Discard liquid and refrigerate labne until required.

**2** Whisk yeast, 200gm bread flour and 200ml room-temperature water in a bowl, cover with plastic wrap and set aside at room temperature until bubbling with a slightly fermented smell (about 12 hours). Transfer to an electric mixer fitted with a dough hook, then add remaining flour, 110ml lukewarm water and ½ tbsp salt, and knead until dough is smooth and slightly sticky (8-10 minutes). Transfer to a lightly oiled bowl, cover with plastic wrap and set aside to prove (2½-3 hours).

**3** Preheat oven to 250C and place a heavy tray in oven to heat. Knock back dough on a floured surface, roll to a round of about 30cm diameter, transfer to a sheet of baking paper and, with wet hands, stretch dough to your desired shape, pressing the top to form indentations. Spray or brush with water, scatter with nigella seeds, onion flakes and sea salt flakes, then slide onto prepared baking tray and bake until golden and cooked (14-16 minutes). Cool briefly, then serve with labne drizzled with olive oil and black pepper, cress and black garlic to spread on bread.

**Note** Black garlic is available from select grocers and online at tasmanianblackgarlic.com.au.

**Drink suggestion** Cold, crisp pilsner-style lager.

## Caramel pudding with crème fraîche, rhubarb and vanilla

*This dessert combines two favourites – rice pudding and brûlée – in one. The crème fraîche gives a subtle tang to cut the richness. Begin this recipe two days ahead to make the crème fraîche.*

**Prep time 45 mins, cook 3 hrs**

(plus fermenting)

Serves 6

100 gm short-grain rice

85 gm raw caster sugar, plus extra to serve

1 vanilla bean, split, seeds scraped

Finely grated rind of 1 lemon

1 litre (4 cups) milk

### Crème fraîche

500 ml pouring cream

60 ml (¼ cup) buttermilk

### Rhubarb and vanilla

750 gm rhubarb, cut into 3cm lengths

110 gm (½ cup) caster sugar

Juice and rind of 1 orange

Scraped seeds of 1 vanilla bean

**1** For crème fraîche, stir together cream and buttermilk in a container and leave at room temperature until thick (24-40 hours, depending on climate; do not stir). Refrigerate until required. Makes about 400gm.

**2** Preheat oven to 140C. Combine rice, sugar, vanilla bean and seeds, rind and half the milk in a 2-litre baking dish and bake for 1 hour. Add remaining milk, stir, cook for a further hour, then stir in 150gm crème fraîche, and bake until golden and set (45 minutes to 1 hour). Cool slightly, then scatter with caster sugar in a thin even layer and caramelise with a blowtorch or under a hot grill.

**3** For rhubarb, bring ingredients and 2 tbsp water to the boil in a saucepan, reduce heat to low and simmer, stirring occasionally, until tender (10-12 minutes). Serve with warm rice pudding and remaining crème fraîche.

**Wine suggestion** Apricot botrytis sémillon. ●

**PUDDING** Robert Gordon  
baking dish from Chef  
and the Cook. Dish  
(with rhubarb) from  
The Bay Tree. Marble  
board from Koskela.  
All other props stylist's  
own. Stockists p183.



Caramel pudding with  
crème fraîche, rhubarb  
and vanilla



# turn to custard

Nothing spells comfort quite like custard. Baked in flaky pastry, fried as a fritter or poured as a partner to a fruity pudding, its silky goodness is the making of many a sweet.

RECIPES & FOOD STYLING EMMA KNOWLES

PHOTOGRAPHY WILLIAM MEPPEM STYLING LUCY TWEED



Bread and butter pudding  
with banana and butterscotch  
sauce (RECIPE P142)

**TARTS** Kaz Ceramics  
small dish from Koskela.  
All other props stylist's own.  
Stockists p183. **PUDDING**  
All props stylist's own.



Portuguese custard  
tarts (RECIPE P142)

## Portuguese custard tarts

This recipe calls for pastry made from scratch, which makes for a beautifully flaky tart. It makes enough for 24 tarts and it's difficult to reduce the quantity, so freeze half for the next time you crave these moreish treats. Shop-bought butter puff pastry, such as Carême, will also work but the tarts won't be quite as good – there's nothing quite like this homemade pastry. Start this recipe a day ahead to rest the pastry.

**Prep time 40 mins, cook 15 mins  
(plus resting, cooling)**

**Makes 12 (pictured p141)**

300 gm (2 cups) plain flour

230 gm softened butter

25 gm caster sugar

1 tsp ground cinnamon

Pure icing sugar and ground cinnamon, for dusting

### Custard filling

6 egg yolks

130 gm caster sugar

35 gm (1/4 cup) cornflour

300 ml each pouring cream and milk

3 tsp vanilla bean paste

**1** Combine flour, 1/4 tsp salt and 200ml water in an electric mixer fitted with a dough hook and knead until dough pulls away from the sides of the bowl (1-2 minutes). Turn out onto a lightly floured surface and pat into a 15cm square, wrap in plastic wrap and refrigerate to rest (30 minutes). Roll out on a lightly floured surface to a 45cm square and trim edges if necessary. Spread the left two-thirds of the pastry with a third of the butter, leaving a 2cm border. Fold the unbuttered third of dough over, then fold the left side over to cover. Pat out any air bubbles, pinch edges to seal, then turn pastry 90 degrees so the folded edge is nearest you. Repeat the rolling, buttering, folding and turning process once more, then roll

out pastry to a 45cm x 55cm rectangle and spread with remaining butter leaving a 2cm border. Combine sugar and cinnamon in a bowl, sprinkle mixture over butter, then roll into a tight cylinder from the shortest side. Trim ends, cut in half and wrap each piece in plastic wrap. Refrigerate one half overnight and freeze the other half for use later (defrost in the refrigerator before using).

**2** For custard, preheat oven to 250C. Whisk yolks, sugar, cornflour and a pinch of salt in a bowl to combine, then whisk in cream, milk and vanilla. Transfer to a saucepan and bring to a simmer over medium-high heat, whisking continuously until thick and smooth (4-5 minutes). Transfer to a piping bag fitted with a 1cm plain nozzle, twist bag to seal and set aside until cooled (1-2 hours).

**3** Cut refrigerated pastry cylinder into 12 even pieces, roll out on a lightly floured surface to 12cm-diameter rounds and line twelve 125ml muffin tins, allowing edges to overhang slightly. Fill with custard to 1cm below rims and bake, turning tray partway through cooking, until golden brown and set (10-12 minutes). Cool briefly and serve warm or at room temperature dusted with icing sugar and cinnamon.

## Baked matcha custard with ginger-poached pears

*Matcha gives this baked custard a unique colour and flavour, which pairs beautifully with ginger-poached pears, while the crumb mixture adds texture and crunch.*

**Prep time 30 mins, cook 1 hr 20 mins  
(plus cooling)**

**Serves 6**

250 ml (1 cup) each pouring cream and milk

1½ tsp matcha (see note)

6 egg yolks

80 gm caster sugar

### Ginger-poached pears

330 gm (1½ cups) caster sugar

1 tbsp finely grated ginger

Thinly peeled rind and juice of 1 lemon

4 small ripe pears, such as William, peeled, quartered and cored

### Rice malt crumb

60 gm brown rice flour (see note)

20 gm caster sugar

20 gm rice malt syrup (see note)

15 gm melted butter

1 tsp matcha

**1** Preheat oven to 150C. Whisk cream, milk and matcha in a saucepan and bring to a simmer over medium-high heat. Whisk yolks and sugar in a bowl to combine, then whisk in hot cream mixture. Pour into a jug, skim any bubbles from the surface, then pour into a shallow 800ml ovenproof dish. Place in a roasting pan lined with a tea towel, pour in hot water to come halfway up sides of dish and bake until set with a slight wobble in the centre (50 minutes to 1 hour). Cool to room temperature and refrigerate until chilled (3-4 hours).

**2** Meanwhile, for ginger-poached pears, stir sugar, ginger, lemon rind and juice and 750ml water in a saucepan over medium-high heat, bring to a simmer, then add pears. Cover directly with a round of baking paper, weight with a plate to keep pears submerged, reduce heat to medium and simmer until pears are tender when pierced (10-15 minutes). Set aside in poaching liquid, and drain pears to serve.

**3** For rice malt crumb, preheat oven to 180C. Stir ingredients in a bowl to form a crumbly mixture, spread on an oven tray lined with baking paper and bake, stirring occasionally, until golden and crisp (8-10 minutes). Store in an airtight container.

**4** Serve matcha custard topped with ginger-poached pears and scattered with rice malt crumb.

**Note** Matcha is finely ground green tea. It's available from specialist tea shops and Japanese grocers. Brown rice flour and rice malt syrup are available from health-food shops.

## Bread and butter pudding with banana and butterscotch sauce

*We love this pudding thickly sliced and caramelised in a pan for added texture, but you could cut out the extra step and serve it spooned straight from the tin if you preferred. Just don't skimp on the butterscotch sauce and extra crème fraîche.*

**Prep time 45 mins, cook 1 hr 10 mins  
(plus chilling)**

**Serves 8 (pictured p140)**

120 gm butter

450 gm day-old crustless rye sourdough or wholemeal sourdough bread (about 1½ loaves), coarsely torn

4 eggs and 4 egg yolks

600 gm crème fraîche, plus extra to serve

180 gm caster sugar, plus extra for dusting

400 ml pouring cream

Pure icing sugar, for dusting

Thickly sliced banana, to serve

### Butterscotch sauce

170 gm caster sugar

150 ml pouring cream

30 gm butter, diced

**1** Preheat oven to 180C and line a baking tray with baking paper. Melt 80gm butter in a saucepan over low heat, then combine with bread in a large bowl and toss to coat. Spread on the baking tray and bake, shaking occasionally, until golden and evenly toasted (25-30 minutes).

**2** Reduce oven to 160C and line a 10cm-deep, 8.5cm x 22cm loaf tin with baking paper, letting paper overhang sides, and pile in the bread.>



**CUSTARD** All props  
stylist's own. **TEXT**

**PAGE** Clay Canoe Wrap  
Cup from Honeybee.  
All other props stylist's  
own. Stockists p183

Baked matcha custard  
with ginger-poached  
pears



**HOT  
TIP**

Add another layer of texture and flavour to this baked custard by brûléeing the top. Scatter it with a fine even layer of caster sugar and caramelise with a blowtorch, then repeat.

## MORE CUSTARD RECIPES

From sweet (pear brioche tart with maple custard cream) to savoury (Gruyère custards with caramelised tomatoes), we've got plenty more custard recipes online: [gourmettraveller.com.au](http://gourmettraveller.com.au)



**RHUBARB** Clay Canoe Rockpool Glaze dish and Wrap Cup from Honeybee.  
**FRITTERS** Clay Canoe platter from Honeybee. All other props stylist's own. Stockists p183.

Rhubarb-hazelnut puddings with brown sugar-brandy custard





Lemon custard fritters

Whisk eggs, yolks, crème fraîche and caster sugar in a bowl until smooth, then whisk in cream and pour mixture over bread, pressing to submerge, and stand until bread is soaked (30 minutes; some bread will rise up again, which is okay – it'll be nice and crunchy when baked). Scatter with extra sugar and bake until golden and firm, and a skewer withdraws clean (45 minutes to 1 hour). Cool in tin, then refrigerate until firm. Bread and butter pudding can be made up to 3 days ahead.

**3** For butterscotch sauce, stir sugar and 90ml water in a saucepan over medium-high heat until sugar dissolves, then bring to the boil and cook without stirring until dark caramel (4–5 minutes). Remove from heat, carefully add 100ml water (hot caramel will spit), return to heat and stir in cream, butter and ½ tsp salt. Keep warm.

**4** Preheat oven to 180C. Thickly slice bread and butter pudding, place slices on a baking tray lined with baking paper and dust heavily with icing sugar. Heat a quarter of the remaining butter in a large frying pan, add 2 pudding slices sugared-side down, and cook until caramelised (1–2 minutes). Dust tops with icing sugar, turn and caramelise (1–2 minutes). Transfer to tray, wipe out pan and repeat until all pudding slices are caramelised, then transfer to oven to warm through (3–5 minutes). Serve warm topped with sliced banana, a dollop of crème fraîche, and drizzled with butterscotch sauce.

### Rhubarb-hazelnut puddings with brown sugar-brandy custard

We love this hot pudding (and the rhubarb hidden at the bottom), paired with thick chilled custard. Perfect.

**Prep time 30 mins, cook 30 mins (plus cooling)**

**Makes 6**

- 750 gm (about 2 bunches) rhubarb, coarsely chopped
- 275 gm raw caster sugar
- Juice and finely grated rind of 1 orange and ½ lemon
- Scraped seeds of 1 vanilla bean (reserve bean for custard)
- 1 cinnamon quill
- 250 gm melted butter
- 125 gm brown sugar
- 4 eggs, separated
- 50 ml buttermilk
- 200 gm plain flour
- 50 gm hazelnut meal
- 1 tsp baking powder
- Chopped roasted hazelnuts, to serve

**Brown sugar-brandy custard**

- 6 egg yolks
- 100 gm brown sugar
- 450 ml pouring cream
- 150 ml milk
- 30 ml brandy

**1** Preheat oven to 200C. Toss rhubarb, 150gm caster sugar, juices, vanilla seeds and cinnamon in a roasting pan and roast until tender (25–30 minutes), discard cinnamon and set aside.

**2** Meanwhile, for custard, whisk yolks and sugar in a bowl to combine. Bring cream, milk, brandy and

vanilla bean to the simmer in a saucepan over medium-high heat, then pour into yolk mixture while whisking continuously. Return mixture to pan and stir continuously until it thickly coats the back of a spoon (4–5 minutes). Strain into a bowl, cover and refrigerate to chill.

**3** Reduce oven to 180C. Butter six 350ml shallow ovenproof bowls or ramekins, spoon a little rhubarb and syrup into each, then pour 60ml custard into each. Beat butter, brown sugar, rinds and remaining caster sugar in a bowl until pale (1–2 minutes), beat in yolks and buttermilk, then fold in flour, hazelnut meal and baking powder. Whisk eggwhites with a pinch of salt in a bowl to soft peaks, fold into batter, then spoon into ramekins. Bake until golden and centre springs back when gently pressed (25–30 minutes). Scatter with hazelnuts and serve hot with chilled brown sugar-brandy custard and extra rhubarb.

### Lemon custard fritters

*These tangy fritters are just the ticket on a wintry day. Switch up the spices in the sugar for a change if you like – cinnamon, nutmeg or cloves would all work well.*

**Prep time 30 mins, cook 15 mins (plus cooling)**

**Serves 6–8**

160 ml each milk and pouring cream  
Finely grated rind and juice of 1 lemon

- 3 egg yolks
- 65 gm caster sugar
- 20 gm cornflour
- 20 gm plain flour, plus extra for dusting
- 20 ml limoncello
- 50 gm firm ricotta, finely crumbled
- 20 gm glacé lemon or glacé orange, diced
- Vegetable oil, for deep-frying

#### Spiced sugar

- 1 star anise
- Seeds of 1 cardamom pod
- 150 gm caster sugar
- Finely grated rind of 1 lemon

**1** Bring milk, cream and rind to the simmer in a saucepan over medium-high heat. Whisk yolks, sugar, cornflour and flour in a bowl to combine (this will be quite a dry mixture), then, whisking continuously, add hot cream mixture. Return to pan and whisk continuously until thick and smooth (3–4 minutes), then remove from heat, whisk in juice and limoncello, and stir in ricotta and glacé fruit. Transfer to a container, cover directly with plastic wrap to prevent a skin forming and refrigerate until chilled (3–4 hours; custard can be made up to 2 days ahead).

**2** For spiced sugar, dry-roast star anise and cardamom seeds in a small pan over medium-high heat until fragrant (30 seconds to 1 minute; see cook's notes p184), then finely grind with a mortar and pestle and combine in a bowl with sugar and rind.

**3** Heat oil in a large saucepan to 180C. Spoon rough tablespoons of custard into flour in a bowl, dust to coat, then deep-fry in batches, turning occasionally, until golden brown (1–2 minutes). Drain briefly on paper towels, toss in spiced sugar and serve hot. >



Frozen peanut-butter custard cups

Gloriously **soft, melty custard** cups powered by peanut butter and topped with pretzels? Pass the spoon.

#### Frozen peanut-butter custard cups

*Custard is the base of many ice-creams – this version is best served within an hour or two of churning for a gloriously soft, melty consistency.*

**Prep time 20 mins, cook 10 mins (plus chilling, freezing)**

**Serves 6-8**

600 ml thickened cream  
250 ml (1 cup) milk  
150 gm peanut butter  
100 gm corn syrup  
1 tsp vanilla bean paste  
8 egg yolks  
120 gm caster sugar  
Mini marshmallows, popcorn and pretzels, to serve

**1** Bring cream, milk, peanut butter, corn syrup and vanilla to a simmer in a saucepan over medium-high heat, whisking occasionally until combined. Whisk yolks and sugar in a bowl until pale (4-5 minutes), then, whisking continuously, pour in hot cream mixture and whisk to combine. Return custard to pan and stir continuously over medium heat until mixture thickly coats the back of the spoon (5-6 minutes). Transfer to a bowl

and refrigerate, whisking occasionally, until chilled (2-3 hours). Freeze in an ice-cream machine (be careful not to overchurn or the mixture will split) and serve within a couple of hours in chilled cups, topped with mini marshmallows, popcorn and crumbled pretzels.

#### Orange custard cream layer cake

*This one's excellent for feeding a crowd, but if you're catering for a smaller group, cut the cake component down by a third. Make the full quantity of custard cream filling though – it won't go to waste.*

**Prep time 50 mins, cook 30 mins (plus cooling)**

**Serves 10-12**

9 eggs, at room temperature  
140 gm each brown sugar and caster sugar  
Scraped seeds of 1 vanilla bean  
Finely grated rind of 1 orange  
180 gm plain flour, triple-sieved  
¾ tsp baking powder  
60 gm almond meal  
80 gm butter, melted and cooled  
120 gm marmalade  
30 ml orange liqueur, plus extra for brushing  
Slivered almonds, to serve

#### Orange custard cream

125 ml (½ cup) each milk and pouring cream  
Finely grated rind and juice of 1 orange

3 egg yolks

50 gm caster sugar

20 gm cornflour

15 gm plain flour

20 ml orange liqueur

200 ml thickened cream, whisked to soft peaks

#### Chocolate fudge glaze

100 gm caster sugar

200 gm dark chocolate (53%-60% cocoa solids), finely chopped

300 ml pouring cream

**1** Preheat oven to 180C. Butter three 20cm-diameter cake tins, line the bases with baking paper and dust the sides with flour. Whisk eggs, sugars, vanilla seeds and orange rind on high speed in an electric mixer until mixture triples in volume and holds a trail (10-12 minutes). Transfer to a large bowl, sift in flour and baking powder in 2 batches, folding to combine after each addition, then fold in almond meal then butter. Divide evenly among prepared cake tins and bake, swapping tins partway through cooking, until dark golden and centres spring back when gently pressed (15-20 minutes). Cool briefly in tins, then cool completely on a wire rack.

**2** For custard cream, bring milk, cream and rind to the simmer in a saucepan over medium-high heat. Whisk yolks, sugar, cornflour, flour and juice in a bowl to combine (this will be quite a dry mixture), then, whisking continuously, pour in hot cream mixture. Return custard to pan and whisk continuously until thick and smooth (3-4 minutes). Remove from heat and whisk in liqueur. Transfer to a bowl, cover directly with plastic wrap to prevent a skin forming and refrigerate until chilled. Whisk to loosen, then fold in thickened cream.

**3** For chocolate fudge glaze, stir sugar and 60ml water in a saucepan over medium-high heat until sugar dissolves, bring to the boil and cook until a light syrup forms (30 seconds). Add chocolate and remove from heat. Meanwhile, bring cream to the boil, add to chocolate and stand for 5 minutes, then stir until smooth and glossy. Set aside.

**4** Stir marmalade and liqueur in a small saucepan over medium-high heat until combined. Brush each sponge cake with a little extra liqueur, then spread marmalade mixture over two of the cakes and top each with half the orange custard cream, spreading to the edges. Stack one cake on top of the other on a serving plate, then top with remaining cake. Drizzle with warm chocolate fudge glaze, scatter with almonds and serve with extra warmed chocolate fudge glaze. ●

HOT  
TIP

The cake and custard cream filling for this layer cake can be made several hours ahead and assembled just before serving. Make the fudge sauce fresh, though - it's best served warm.

Orange custard cream layer cake



LAYER CAKE

& CUSTARD CUPS

All props stylist's own.



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 SILVERSEA

JULY 2015

# travel

We head out of town to coastal California and northern New South Wales to find dining and adventures on the fringes.

**Beyond Byron** The beaches are as magical as ever and the locals just as herbal, but the towns and countryside around Byron are now home to a host of ambitious new eating and drinking experiences.

**Yes Sur** Following in the footsteps of Henry Miller, we head to Big Sur, where the rugged landscape attracts writers, soul searchers and escapees from the city alike.

**Hosts and glory** The cream of the nation's hotel world turned out for an evening of fine food and wine at the our 2015 Hotel Guide Awards.

PHOTOGRAPHY WILLIAM MEEPEM





# beyond Byron

The beaches are as magical as ever and the locals just as herbal, but the towns and countryside around Byron, writes ***Pat Nourse***, are now home to a host of ambitious new eating and drinking experiences.

PHOTOGRAPHY WILLIAM MEPPEM





### GREEN MILE

Sour yellow curry of local fish and a turmeric and rosewater lassi at 100 Mile Table.  
Opposite: The Farm.



Let's face it, the wider world is becoming more Byron than the other way around. Kombucha is (somehow) a household word now, man-buns have been deemed an acceptable hairstyle for blokes, and the market for the organic, the biodynamic, the hand-woven and the unsprayed has now leapt the farmers' market fence, broken its health-food-shop shackles and turned into a billion-dollar global industry.

Back in the bay, meanwhile, the eating has never been better. But here's the thing: none of the really good eating is actually in Byron itself. There are still good times to be had throwing down cold-pressed kale and cos juice at Bayleaf while watching city kids unconvincingly attempt the no-shoes-at-lunch look, sure, and In the Pink still dazzles with its Violet Crumble gelato, but the really exciting stuff is now further afield.

Some of it, like Folk, 100 Mile Table and the various things at The Farm, is just out of town, but, as has been the trend for a few years now, the real gains are being made in the small towns around Byron. Bangalow led the charge, with Katrina and Karl Kanetani's Town earning the Northern Rivers region a star in the *GT* restaurant guide, and now the villages of Brunswick Heads and Mullumbimby (each about a 20-minute drive from central Byron) are stepping up to the plate. Surf's up, food fans – let's get into it.

## FARM TO TABLE

From left: Mark Labrooy, sous-chef Ashley Kent and Darren Robertson of Three Blue Ducks, and their duck liver parfait with bread, Davidson plum relish and crisp wafers of chicken skin.

## THREE BLUE DUCKS

With their home base at Bronte in Sydney's eastern beaches, and with a winter pop-up down at Falls Creek in their recent history, you might think the opening of a new Three Blue Ducks at Byron is simply a move on the part of chefs Mark Labrooy, Darren Robertson and their partners to catch some new waves, deepen their tans and build a bit more vacation into their vocation. But no. Not only is the place big, it's ambitious. In fact, it's gutsy as hell. The Ducks are the keystone tenant at The Farm, a working property near the junction of the Princes Highway and Ewingsdale Road, the main entry point into Byron Bay, owned by developer Tom Lane. They share the space with a florist, a boot camp, a yoga studio and The Bread Social, bakers of what might be the finest loaves seen in these parts – not to mention a herd of Berkshire pigs, a handful of cattle and a full chorus of free-ranging chickens.

With the 100 Mile Table café just down the road, the 400-kilometre line they've drawn here for sourcing produce seems generous – or at least it does till you hear this means their access to such basics as onions and essentials like avocados is, well, seasonal. This is no mere greenwashing. The place is vast (the parking lot has space for coaches), but Labrooy and Robertson have profile enough to draw diners in their hundreds, which means they can buy whole sides of beef and entire crops from local smallholdings and put them to good use.

When they make their (excellent) butter for the table, for instance, the leftover buttermilk is used to



brine birds for their fried chicken, and the whey goes into the sausage rolls they sell at their coffee counter alongside the Single Origin flat whites. The livers from their chickens become an exemplary parfait, served with some grilled slices of that great bread, a relish made from Davidson plum (aka Mullumbimby plum), and crisp wafers of chicken skin. The bones from the beasts become broth, the trim from the beef goes into the burgers, the fish offcuts become fish fingers for the kids' menu. They're trying to close the loop on their production as much as possible. If it's not from The Farm, it's from as close as possible, and waste is kept to a minimum through both careful menu planning and

**Some guests amble in on walking frames, others turn cartwheels on the lawn while the occasional curious hen wanders past. It's a *broad church* and takes all comers.**

smart bulk-buying. Even wine is poured from one of the 56 taps in the bar, alongside a dizzying array of craft beers.

This is an all-day operation, so poached eggs with smoked mackerel chickpeas and labne, and congee accessorised with kimchi, kale and seaweed segue into the lunch and dinner menu, where that same superb local mackerel may appear raw instead in a wonderfully spicy salad with pawpaw and coconut.

They blitz the farmers' markets, stocking unsprayed chillies from Bangalow and Myocum coffee beans alongside gluten-free soy spaghetti, unhulled tahini and raw chocolate on the shelves of their shop. "At the end of the day," says Robertson, "it's the farmers who will be determining what's on the menu."

It seems to be working. In the school holidays the place is overrun by kids squealing at the pigs and playing cricket on the grounds against a backdrop of waving sorghum. Some of the guests amble in on walking frames, others turn cartwheels on the lawn while the occasional curious hen wanders past. It's a broad church and takes all comers – admittedly there are more crystals, dreadlocks and tribal ink than you'd see in Bronte, but the strength of the menu is that you can go deep sprouted-millet-and-buckwheat-vegan-wellness-loaf with a draught kombucha, or you can eat a cheeseburger and punch a beer. Or, as likely as not,



this being Australia in 2015, do both at the same table.  
11 Ewingsdale Rd, Ewingsdale, [threeblueducks.com](http://threeblueducks.com)

## FLEET

In many ways Fleet and the Three Blue Ducks at The Farm couldn't be more different. The Ducks is a big operation, employing scores of people and serving diners by the hundred, whereas Fleet is a small bar-restaurant that, if the wind is blowing right, seats 21. But they're kindred spirits, the two prime movers pushing the region towards a new style of dining. And if anything Fleet's menu is even more ambitious. Astrid McCormack and Josh Lewis both hail from Loam, the eatery on Victoria's Bellarine Peninsula that was named *GT Regional Restaurant of the Year* in 2012. Loam turned heads with its thrilling wine list and endlessly inventive use of unusual local produce, and with McCormack's easy charm on the floor and Lewis doing his thing in the kitchen, they're working a similar magic in miniature at Fleet. It's a bit like eating in the bar of a three-star restaurant, only without the restaurant. McCormack's list is tight, and she makes every bottle count, each of them from vineyards that farm in a sustainable manner, most of them biodynamic or organic, whether they're Australian producers of note (Jamsheed rousanne, Luke Lambert nebbiolo, the splendid Sophie rosé)



## SOCIAL NETWORK

Clockwise, from top left:  
the pasture-feeding  
chickens at The Farm;  
The Bread Social; burnt  
custard and fig at Fleet.



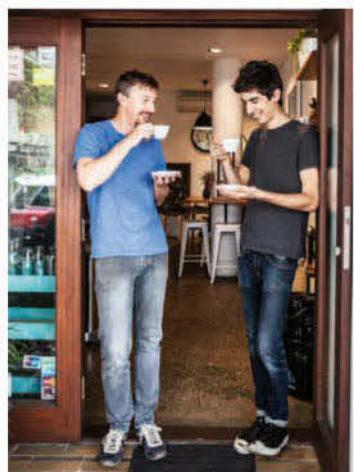
#### TABLE TALK

Communal tables at 100 Mile Table. Opposite, clockwise from top left: Harvest Bakery; Brunswick River; the hinterland; raw fish with spicy pawpaw and coconut salad at the Three Blue Ducks.



The real gains are being made in the small towns around Byron. Bangalow led the charge, and now Brunswick Heads and Mullumbimby are ***stepping up to the plate***.





## BAY WATCH

Above: Alan Shubitz (right) at Table View. Top left: buckwheat hotcakes with figs at Folk. Top right: Milk and Honey's salami pizza, wood-fired mushroom and raw fish share plate.

from Si Vintners) or one of a handful from Beaujolais, Emilia-Romagna or Swartland.

Lewis, meanwhile, doesn't pull any punches. His approach to sustainability (both economic and environmental) is that great alchemy of the kitchen wherein the chef uses wit and skill to make delicacies of things that might otherwise be considered undesirable. He works with lamb breast and chicken livers, but his food is as delectable as any fillet or foie. A meal might begin not with olives, but pickled cucamelons, before leading into a lush cream of smoked mullet served with crisps of fish skin and potato for dipping. Tiny, delicate bottle squid shine on a savoury slash of long-cooked greens accented with shavings of Buddha's hand citrus fresh from the Mullum markets, while veal sweetbreads, breaded, fried golden and served with anchovy mayo on soft little rounds of bread, become the schnitty sandwich of your wine-drinking dreams.

The detailing of the place is superb, from the music to the custom-made chairs to the smooth, polished concrete of the bar – and all the more incongruous for being in Brunswick Heads. This is food that would be considered fairly out-there in Fitzroy or Fortitude Valley. Serving it a few doors down from the Centrelink and across the road from a caravan park in a town of 1,636 souls is, well, intriguing. Are you a diner who loathes dégustation dining but still hankers for food and drink with plenty of edge? If you eat in one regional restaurant in Australia this year, make it Fleet. 2/16 The Terrace, Brunswick Heads, (02) 6685 1363, [fleet-restaurant.com.au](http://fleet-restaurant.com.au)



## MILK AND HONEY

The standard-bearer for better-than-average food in Mullumbimby for more than a decade, Milk and Honey has been banging out wood-fired pizza with the best of them, but the arrival two years ago of chef Timmy Brebner saw things take a fresh turn for the interesting. Case in point: a pizza that deploys not only the nation-beating hot sausage made by Salumi Australia nearby at Billinudgel, but drops the hammer with all the salty tasty things by adding shavings of locally made bottarga. Should the ballsy likes of the cured beef tongue with pancetta and olives prove a bit too exciting, the prosciutto, potato, onion and rosemary number is hard to beat, and the wine list includes a smart handful of Italians by the glass alongside such progressive Australians as Quealy and Tom Shobbrook. 5/59A Station St, Mullumbimby, (02) 6684 1422, [milkandhoneymullumbimby.com.au](http://milkandhoneymullumbimby.com.au)

## FOLK

At Folk the milks include Barambah organic cow's milk and Bonsoy plus the milks of the coconut, almond and oat. There's turmeric and gingko in the ginger beer and tahini in the smoothies, and the "add chia" line is no joke. This is all the more fascinating when you take in the setting, just over the road from the caravan park on Ewingsdale Road. The Jayco and RV crowd have rarely had it this good. The Folk burger comes stuffed with sizzling-hot local fish, grilled pineapple, slaw, coconut chilli and lime, while the house-brewed creaming soda-style vanilla kefir special is garnished with a leaf of mint, a viola blossom and a pretty



candy-striped straw. The java from Melbourne's mighty Dukes Espresso is pleasing – almost as pleasing, that is, as the little hatch on the side of the cottage under a sign that reads "coffee".

*Lot 1, 399 Ewingsdale Rd, Byron Bay*

### 100 MILE TABLE

It doesn't get much less Byron-cliché than the setting at 100 Mile Table, which sits among the Gyprock joints, mechanics' workshops and storage farms of the industrial estate. Owners Sarah Swan and her partner Jeremy Burn like to tool around in a camouflage-painted 4WD, too, rather than on solar-powered unicycles or flying yoga mats. But this is merely the home base for their operation. The pair draw on their formidable experience in the culinary sphere (Swan, for one, worked for the Rockpool Group in Sydney for 14 years) to stage events around the region, doing dinners and parties in paddocks, breweries and rugby clubs. In between these,



the pair run their sparsely decorated headquarters as a weekday-only café. At upholstered Valvoline drums and wide communal tables under an iron beam strung with eight matching soda siphons, the morning crowd wolfs down top-hole granola and cheese toasties dripping with pickles along with well-made Marvell Street Roasters coffee and turmeric-tinted rosewater lassi.

*8 Banksia Dr, Byron Bay, (02) 6680 9814, 100miletale.com*

### TABLE VIEW

The Shubitz brothers bring no small amount of coffee cred to their café operation. Owner Marc ran the machine at Harry's in Bondi for years and did a stint at the Coffee Collective in Copenhagen to expand his horizons, while Allen, the manager, clocked three years at Allpress. Their supremely confident work with Marvell Street Coffee Roasters beans is the coffee by which all others between Sydney and the border might be judged. *Shop 4, 30 Mullumbimbi St, Brunswick Heads, (02) 6685 0111, tableview.com.au*

### YAMI

What this Israeli eatery lacks in terms of comfort, welcome and most of the other basics of hospitality it more than makes up for with the quality of its cooking.



### SURF 'N' TURF

Clockwise, from top:  
Fleet's veal sweetbread schnitzel sandwich with anchovy mayonnaise;  
Main Beach at Byron Bay; the bar at Fleet.



## LAUD BYRON

Clockwise, from top:  
Byron Bay; falafels and  
hummus at Yami;  
Harvest Bakery.



This is a part of the world where falafels and hummus are common coin, and examined with unforgiving scrutiny (especially, it must be said, as far as price is concerned), but while the takeaway counter and patio are rudimentary, the attention to detail on the plate is impressive. The most deluxe of the hummus options sees the creamy dip holding a pool of garlicky broad beans braised Egyptian-style in tomato and garnished with olives, pickles, a sliced boiled egg and a shower of parsley. Hell, it's so good you might not even notice the absence of meat from the menu. If you're here for a few days, be sure to stock up on the hummus, baba ghanoush and tabbouleh for the fridge for perfect post-surf snacking. *2/1 Park St, Brunswick Heads, (02) 6685 0186*

## HARVEST BAKERY

Set just off the highway between Byron and Ballina, the microscopic hamlet of Newrybar seems almost like a company town, so central is Harvest to its place on the map. There's the restaurant proper, set in a beautiful tree-shaded Queenslander, and then there's the deli next door, which sells house-made gravlax, hams, local and imported cheese, books, baskets and ready-made meals, but it's the latest addition to the empire that appeals to us most. At the bottom of the garden is an outbuilding housing an old wood-burning Metters oven. The bakery makes the bread for the restaurant and the shop, and on weekend mornings it opens up as a café, its bricks and boards strewn with gleaming rows of pastries and pies, slices and scrolls which are by no stretch rustic. Get in early, because they go fast and when they're gone they're gone. *18-22 Old Pacific Hwy, Newrybar, (02) 6687 2644, harvestcafe.com.au*



## MULLUMBIMBY FARMERS' MARKET

In the Northern Rivers region, growers' markets sprout faster than Magic Happens stickers on Kombis, but none of them strike quite as perfect a balance between the useful, the edible, the entertaining and the just plain weird as the Friday morning gathering just outside Mullumbimby. Sugarcane juicers, kale dealers, hemp weavers, almond activators, pretty hippies, crusty buskers and all manner of nannas, dogs and kids turn out in force at this mecca for everything stone-ground, hand-picked, spray-free, grass-fed and dry-grown. Highlights include very local fruit, kraut and kimchi from Byron Bay Alive Foods and the excellent Sicilian food from the Nomadic Kitchen. Pull up a plate of toast and fried eggs with a sauté of peas and lentils between trestles piled high with flaming dragonfruit and tender young ginger and soak it all up.

*7am-11am, Fridays, 51 Main Arm Rd, Mullumbimby, (02) 6677 1345, mullumfarmersmarket.org.au.*

## SCRATCH PÂTISSERIE

Angie and Greg Wilton opened Scratch on a side-street in Mullumbimby last spring, and they've quickly found a loyal following for their pasties, pork and fennel sausage rolls, croissants and the refreshing variety of their gluten-free offerings. Their all-organic breads come in a rotation that runs from the relatively regular likes of the sourdough spelt to the more out-there rye and wakame loaf. The cheese in the toastie is Nimbin Valley cheddar, the eggs in the pastries are frequently from their own chooks, and the welcome is genuine. *6/108 Stuart St, Mullumbimby, (02) 6684 2914, scratchpatisserie.com.au*



## PAPER DAISY

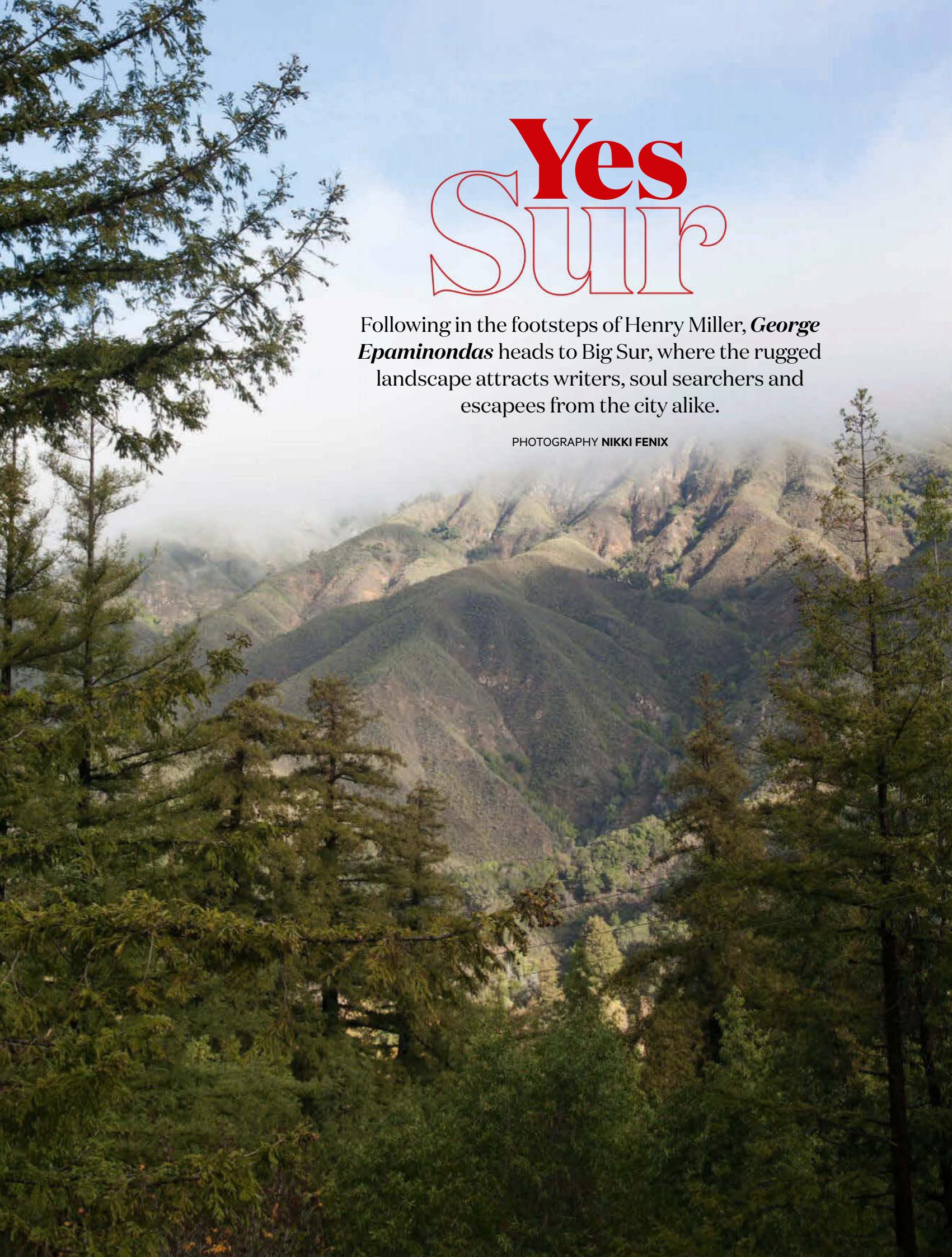
This one was just opening as we went to press, so we haven't put it through its paces yet, but it's full of promise. Ben Devlin was head chef at Brisbane's Esquire, but has also been going back to basics lately with his Beerkary Bakery project, and his first menus at Paper Daisy seem to strike a balance between intriguing inventiveness and holiday-appropriate approachability. That could mean pastrami and pickles on rye, with each element made in-house, or mushrooms with brown butter, hazelnuts and thyme, or something from the grill – cod cooked in paperbark, say, or crayfish with garlic. The fact that the restaurant is part of Halcyon House, regional New South Wales' newest (and possibly fanciest) boutique hotel, certainly doesn't diminish its appeal. We'll see you there.

*Halcyon House, 21 Cypress Cres, Cabarita Beach, (02) 6676 1444, halcyonhouse.com.au* ●



## MARKET FORCES

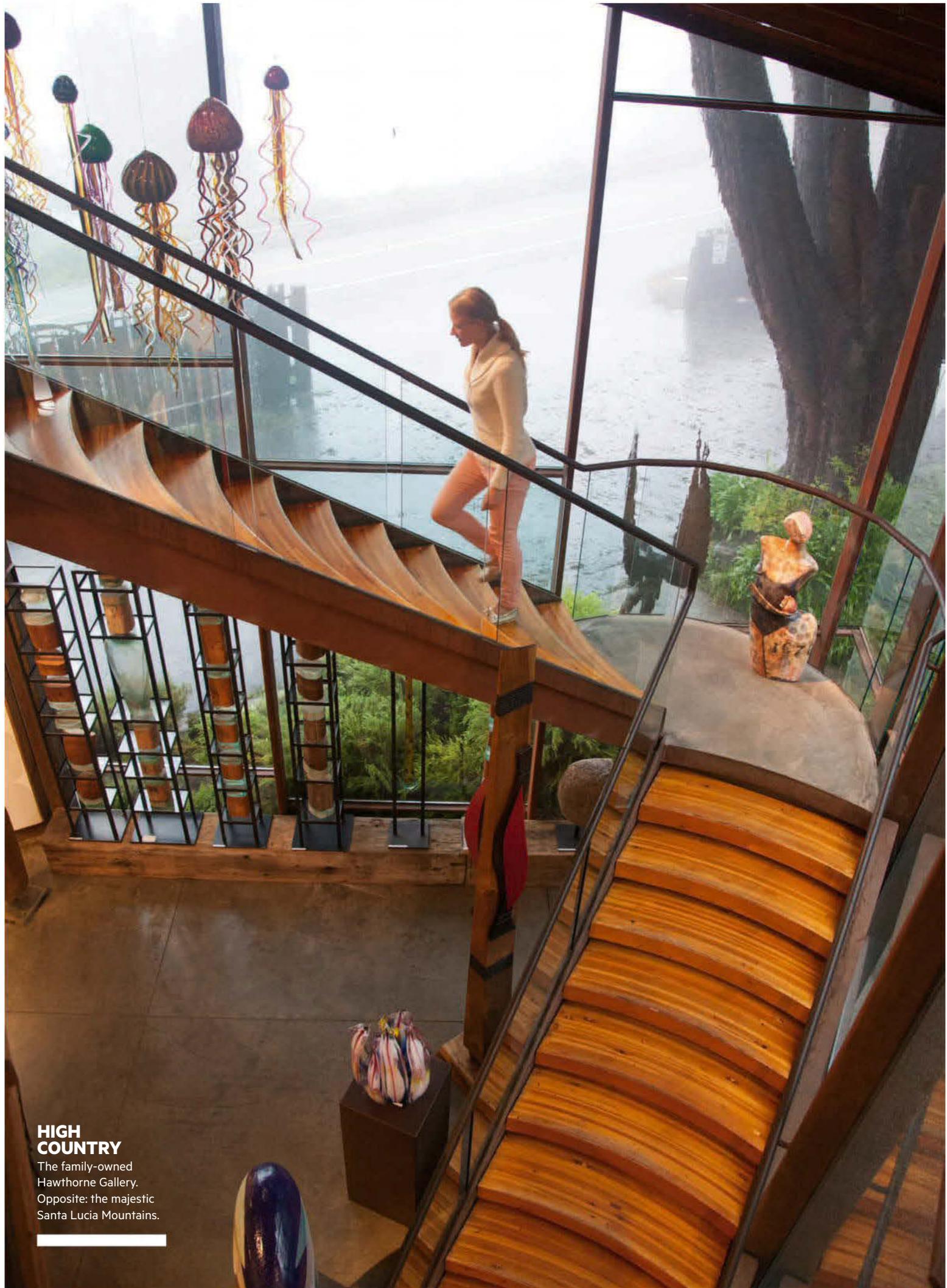
Clockwise, from top:  
Brunswick Heads;  
croissants at Scratch  
Pâtisserie; Mullumbimby  
Farmers' Market; Ben  
Devlin of Paper Daisy.

A wide-angle photograph of a rugged mountain range, likely the Big Sur area. The mountains are covered in dense green vegetation and some exposed rock. A layer of low-hanging clouds or fog sits at the base of the mountains. In the foreground, the dark green branches and needles of a large evergreen tree frame the scene. The sky above is a clear, pale blue.

# Yes Sur

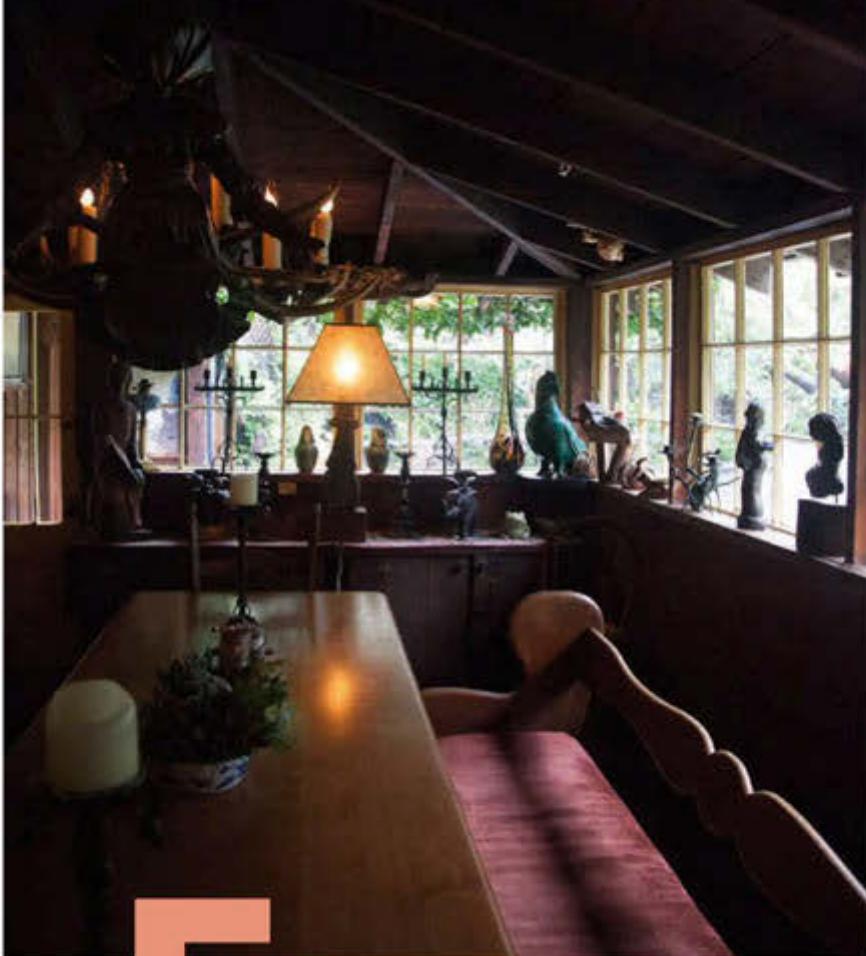
Following in the footsteps of Henry Miller, *George Epaminondas* heads to Big Sur, where the rugged landscape attracts writers, soul searchers and escapees from the city alike.

PHOTOGRAPHY NIKKI FENIX



## HIGH COUNTRY

The family-owned  
Hawthorne Gallery.  
Opposite: the majestic  
Santa Lucia Mountains.



# F

Flanked by the majestic Santa Lucia Mountains on one side and the rugged Pacific Coast on the other, California's Highway 1 affirms its reputation as America's most scenic freeway. At least, that is, when it's burnished with sunshine. A few hours before my arrival an ominous thunderhead rumbled in from the sea, recasting the green landscape in shades of grey and cloaking the highway with a mist of drizzle. As the rain pinged off my windshield, and waves crashed with unrelenting fury on the rocks 400 metres below, the zigzagging road took on a more perilous appearance. Navigating its twists and turns required the steely focus of a Formula One champion. I resisted the urge to rubberneck at the handful of breathtaking glass homes along the cliffs. Instead, I consoled myself with the thought of my ultimate destination: Big Sur.

Situated between Carmel in the north and San Simeon in the south, Big Sur is a place of transcendent beauty, of steep cliffs, serene hiking trails and picturesque beaches. Each summer the hordes descend like a plague of Patagonia-wearing locusts, clogging up its hotels and restaurants and bringing Highway 1 to a maddening halt. But in the winter, as I discovered, one can revel in the bliss of solitude. I was inspired to visit off-season by Henry Miller, who lived here between 1944 and 1962. "From November to February are the best months, the air fresh and invigorating, the skies

## TO SUR WITH LOVE

Above, from left: the dining room at Deetjen's Big Sur Inn; seafood stew at Big Sur Roadhouse.



clear, the sun still warm enough to take a sunbath," Miller wrote. Indeed, Big Sur has a temperate climate, with less fog in winter than in summer. An invitation to stay at Post Ranch Inn confirmed my plans. I was in like Flynn, you might say.

I elected to fly into San José international airport, two hours north of Big Sur. By the time I arrived at the resort, shafts of sunlight filtered through the clouds, lending it a celestial glow. Designed by architect Mickey Muennig, the adults-only hideaway fuses luxury and sustainability with the pristine splendour of the site itself. His harmonious structures mimic the coastline: there are ocean rooms with curved walls, tree houses on stilts and more spacious cabins with cantilevered terraces and outdoor hot tubs. The staff here are so solicitous they offered me a glass of red wine when I arrived and drove me to my ocean room, up a hill behind the reception area. By dusk, a blanket of fog had eclipsed my spectacular view but it mattered little. The rooms are calibrated for comfort, with a digital sound system, a wood-burning fireplace and an oversized tile and slate Jacuzzi bathtub. I started a fire, poured a glass of Bowlus pinot noir and began to decompress.

A couple of hours later, I ventured to dinner. Outside, a strong gust of wind inverted my umbrella within seconds. "Are you okay?" a passing staff member inquired. I must have looked like Mr Bean in the middle of a meltdown. Admittedly, I was still adjusting to the elements. Sierra Mar, the hotel's restaurant, soothed my jangled nerves immediately.

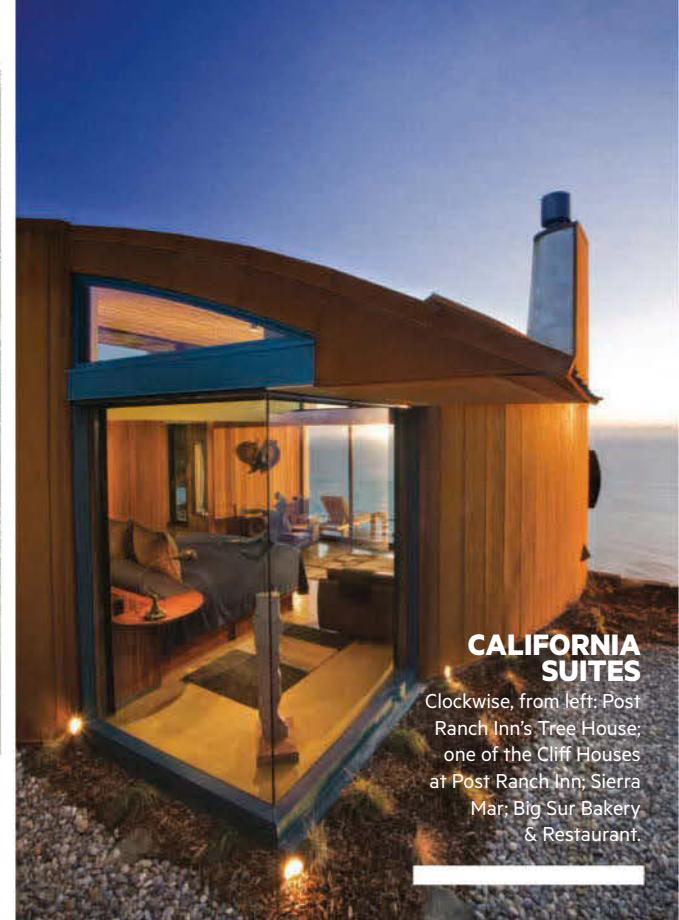


An on-site spa offers rarefied treatments, such as **wildflower facials, jade stone massages** and “vibrational resonance” sessions.

It's an impossibly romantic spot – with chiaroscuro lighting and a dramatic glass wall – staffed by knowledgeable waiters and populated mostly by couples celebrating anniversaries. Chef John Cox, who joined in 2012, is known for his elaborate tasting menus featuring local ingredients such as Monterey red abalone and chanterelle mushrooms. To start, I ordered an appetiser of black sesame fried egg. Served with poached leek, steamed cabbage and a truffle emulsion, it tasted remarkably exotic. In contrast, dishes like kale pappardelle with kale pesto, almonds and orange, and hay-roasted quail seemed like wholly modern inventions.

The next morning, after attending a yoga class in a yurt and plunging into one of the resort's hot-spring pools, I was feeling euphoric. An on-site spa offers rarefied treatments, such as wildflower facials, jade stone massages and “vibrational resonance” sessions, in which tuning forks are used to calm frazzled energy fields. All I needed was a breakfast fork and a cup of robust Vittoria coffee, a recent addition to the menu. Metaphysical types have long flocked to Big Sur to find themselves. Not far from Post Ranch is Esalen Institute, which hosts a cascade of self-improvement workshops – everything from meditation to sexual intimacy, leadership training to shamanic cosmology. “Bring a rattle, a drum, a notebook”, read the course instructions for the latter class. Esalen accepts daytrippers for its spring-fed hot sulphur baths, but not in inclement weather. Still, I wasn't about to let a little precipitation cause me any consternation.

Settlers to this untamed oasis only came a century ago, and the landmarks bear their names, Mount Manuel, Pfeiffer Ridge, Cooper Point among them. Electricity didn't arrive until the early 1950s and it still doesn't extend into some of the isolated



### CALIFORNIA SUITES

Clockwise, from left: Post Ranch Inn's Tree House; one of the Cliff Houses at Post Ranch Inn; Sierra Mar: Big Sur Bakery & Restaurant.



mountainous areas. It's “an inviting land, but hard to conquer”, Miller observed in *Big Sur and the Oranges of Hieronymus Bosch*, his 1957 memoir. “It seeks to remain unspoiled, uninhabited by man.” Certainly, hiking around the Ventana Wilderness later that day, I barely saw another soul. The rain had subsided enough for me to explore a short trail, where I encountered spectacular redwood groves, dramatic waterfalls, and a storybook menagerie including black-tail deer, grey squirrels and the magnificent indigo plumage of Steller's jays. In winter, grey whales, sea lions, sea otters and monarch butterflies can be also spotted. Condors, which were facing extinction, have been successfully reintroduced to the area and one swooped overhead near the entrance of Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park.>





On day three, I traded my luxe clifftop room for a charming cabin by a creek at Glen Oaks Big Sur lodge. The 1950s-era motor inn has been meticulously updated by designer Steve Justrich in a pleasing blend of mid-century-modern and contemporary aesthetics, with bamboo floors and Eames chairs. My cabin was nestled in a copse of soaring redwoods trees, and soundtracked by the susurruus of the stream. Later that night I met with the lodge's effusive general manager, Jeanette Kenworthy, and her family for dinner at Big Sur Bakery. Kenworthy has lived in Big Sur for 20 years.

"It's a tight-knit community where friends and neighbours pitch in during times of need," she told me. "If someone's water line breaks, everyone rallies together to help fix it." After dinner I ignited my outdoor fire pit, toasted marshmallows for s'mores, and gazed at the patchwork of glittering stars above.

With about a thousand year-round inhabitants, Big Sur remains sparsely populated, if only for a precious few months a year. The residents include descendants of the original ranching families, artists and writers, along with Silicon Valley moguls. The hilly terrain, environmental restrictions imposed by local authorities and dearth of property available for development have kept Big Sur exceptionally well preserved. As a result, real estate prices are high, with land and home prices above \$3.9 million. "It really hasn't changed much," artist Shelby Hawthorne, a lifelong resident, told me. I was touring the esteemed Hawthorne Gallery, which showcases the work of 19 singular artists. "It's like living in a state park but in the last five years the summer influx has become insane," Hawthorne added. "It just means you can't be spontaneous."

## CABIN FEVER

Clockwise from above: Sierra Mar's executive chef John Cox; Big Sur Camp Fire is Sierra Mar's take on s'mores, served on charred wood; Glen Oaks' Big Sur Cabin has two clawfoot soaking tubs and an outdoor fire pit; inside the Big Sur Cabin. Opposite: Bixby Creek Bridge.



You can during the cooler months. I sauntered into all the best restaurants without reservations. I admired McWay Falls, a 25-metre waterfall that drops from granite cliffs into the ocean, with half a dozen people. And when I stopped by Henry Miller Memorial Library, only one other bookworm was there. In summer, the library holds film screenings, live music and poetry readings. As I wended my way back to the airport in brilliant early-morning light, passing sublime redwood-lined canyons and turquoise beaches, I remembered Miller's words. "At dawn its majesty is almost painful to behold. That same prehistoric look. The look of always. Nature smiling at herself in the mirror of eternity." ●

## THE FINE PRINT

### GETTING THERE

**Big Sur** is a six-hour drive from Los Angeles, three hours from San Francisco, and two hours from San José, the closest major airport. The Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau's website, [seemonterey.com](http://seemonterey.com), is a fount of helpful information about Big Sur and its surrounding areas.

### STAY

**Post Ranch Inn** Rooms from \$879. 47900 Highway 1, +1 831 667 2200, [postranchinn.com](http://postranchinn.com)

**Glen Oaks** Rooms from \$358. 47080 Highway 1, +1 831 667 2105, [glenoaksbigsur.com](http://glenoaksbigsur.com)

**Ventana Inn & Spa**

Located on a hillside, this sophisticated retreat with 60 rooms has a modern design, top-notch restaurant and spa. Rooms from \$650. 48123 Highway 1, +1 831 667 2331, [ventanainn.com](http://ventanainn.com)

### EAT

**Big Sur Roadhouse** Chef Brendan Esons is a whizz at top-notch Cali-cuisine,

like seafood stew with local rock cod, crab and clams. 47080 Highway 1, +1 831 667 2370.

**Deetjen's Big Sur Inn**

The heartiest breakfast in town, and dinner in its candle-lit dining room is equally satisfying. 48865 Highway 1, +1 831 667 2378, [deetjens.com](http://deetjens.com)

**Big Sur Bakery** A reliable spot for breakfast pastries, organic salads for lunch, and wood-fired pizza in the evening. 47540 Highway 1, +1 831 667 0520

### SEE

**Pfeiffer Beach** One of the few accessible beaches, with purple-hued sand (from minerals) and

eye-catching rock formations. At the end of Sycamore Canyon Road. Mile marker Mon 45.64

**Julia Pfeiffer Burns State Park**

Take the short trail to catch sight of a year-round waterfall gushing onto the beach below. Highway 1, mile marker Mon 36

**Pfeiffer Big Sur State Park**

This vast park offers numerous campsites, picnic tables, hiking trails and swimming. 47555 Highway 1, mile marker 46.9

**Henry Miller Memorial Library**

48603 Highway 1, +1 831 667 2574, [henrymiller.org](http://henrymiller.org)

**Esalen Institute**

55000 Highway 1, +1 888 837 2536, [esalen.org](http://esalen.org)

### SHOP

**Hawthorne Gallery**

Discover contemporary painting, sculpture, blown glass, and ceramics at this gallery designed by the same architect who did Post Ranch Inn. 48485 Highway 1, +1 831 667 3200, [hawthornegallery.com](http://hawthornegallery.com)

**The Gallery At Ventana**

A nicely curated selection of artworks, photography, ceramics and sculptures. 48123 Highway 1, +1 831 667 2787.

**The Phoenix**

Eclectic homewares, clothing, toiletries and toys can be found at this emporium. 48510 Highway 1, +1 831 667 2347, [phoenixshopbigsur.com](http://phoenixshopbigsur.com)





**DISCOVER  
MORE**

Use the free **viewa** app and scan this page to witness amazing Auckland for yourself.

# EXPERIENCE THE REAL AUCKLAND

Discover all the hidden gems of this beautiful city and explore its stunning surrounds.

**A**uckland is a tale of two cities. While thoroughly modern and abuzz with urban sophistication, its astounding setting provides a natural playground, creating a captivating duality to reward even the most experienced traveller. Fine boutiques neighbour international fashion brands; waterfront dining combines with renowned wine country; and a rich cultural heritage draws on a stunning landscape peppered with verdant hills and volcanic cones. With so much delightful diversity, it's easy to fall in love with the 'City of Sails'.

## GREAT DEAL

Enjoy three nights at the five-star Sofitel Auckland Viaduct Harbour, with return transfers and an Oyster Inn Fly & Dine Lunch, from \$1109 per person, twin share.

## PURE JOY

Discover waterfalls in the Waitakere Ranges.

**TOP OF THE WORLD**

Take in the sweeping views while walking along the Omanawanui Track.

**EXPLORE THE GREAT OUTDOORS**

The allure of mother nature is undeniable in Auckland, calling to those who thrive in the outdoors. Travel in any direction outside the city and you could find yourself cruising, fishing, wildlife spotting and more! Hit the rugged west coast for rainforest walks, or head north to the Whangaparaoa Peninsula for a beach stroll. Alternatively, visit the islands of the Hauraki Gulf for adventurous treks that reward with stunning panoramas.

Escape the buzz of the city with a *relaxing day of island-hopping* among the many emerald isles that surround Auckland. From the **rugged volcanic terrain of Rangitoto Island** to the **scenic wineries of Waiheke**, your island adventure awaits.

**LOCAL PRODUCE**

Explore the diversity of Auckland's cuisine.

**DINE OUT**

Inspired by quality, local ingredients, Auckland is prime stomping ground for experienced chefs. Cafes and eateries are tucked around every corner, while areas such as Viaduct Harbour and the Wynyard Quarter satisfy the most discerning foodie. And be sure to explore the modern eateries of Ponsonby, Britomart and City Works Depot.

**VISIT THE VINEYARDS**

Auckland provides plenty of opportunities to enjoy New Zealand's top tipples. Matakana, to the north, has a sweep of boutique wineries, while Kumeu, Auckland's oldest wine region, is steeped in history. And Waiheke Island boasts more than 30 wineries set among rolling hills and blue ocean waters.

**FINE WINE**

Mudbrick Vineyard on Waiheke Island.

**ESCAPE TO A VOLCANO**

Take a kayak across to the majestic Rangitoto Island (above).





# Hosts and glory

The cream of the nation's hotel world turned out for an evening of fine food and wine to celebrate the *Gourmet Traveller* 2015 Hotel Guide Awards, supported by Nespresso.

**A who's who** of the Australian travel industry filled The Langham Sydney's Kent Street Kitchen on 26 May for the launch of the *Gourmet Traveller 2015 Australian Hotel Guide*. Now in its second year, the guide, supported by Nespresso, celebrates the country's top 50 hotels, as judged by our team of professional sleepers, eaters and minibar inspectors, and bestows awards that range from Best Club Sandwich to the big one – Hotel of the Year.

"The Hotel Guide is an opportunity for us to shine a light on the best hotel experiences in Australia," said Anthea Loucas, editor of *Gourmet Traveller*. "We travel across the continent, from Margaret River to Melbourne, to review each and every property listed in the guide and, I might add, we pay our own way. I'm unaware of any other publisher in the country who invests in travel coverage in the same way we do."

Market director of Nespresso Oceania, Loïc Réthoré, joined the celebrations. "Tonight all of our winners have something in common – their passion for excellence," he said, "and this is something that Nespresso values and shares with you."

Richard Munro, CEO of the Accommodation Association of Australia, stepped up to the mic, too. "Now is a buoyant time," he said. "There's \$9 billion due to be invested in the hotel industry over the next five years. You hit the nail right on the head, Bauer Media; last year you launched the guide and we're going to step up to the plate as an industry, and make sure that we can deliver on the products and the promise."

**DESSERT ISLAND**  
Clockwise, from above:  
The lavish dessert  
buffet at The Langham  
Sydney; MC Catriona  
Rountree; chard and  
cauliflower tartare with  
osciatta caviar, quail  
egg and watercress  
gelée; The Langham  
Sydney's pâtissier team.

Anticipation swept across the room as host Catriona Rountree took to the podium to announce the evening's winners. First up was the prize for Best Minibar, awarded to Hobart's Mona Pavilions for its extensive in-room cellar, while Canberra favourite Hotel Hotel took home the titles of Best Bar and Boutique Hotel of the Year.

"We're humbled and very chuffed to have been awarded Best Boutique Hotel and Best Bar," said Hotel Hotel general manager, Tracy Atherton.

Soul Surfers Paradise took the prize for Best Pool with its trio of pools, while Grand Hyatt Melbourne won the award for Best Breakfast. Park Hyatt Sydney snapped up the Best Service gong, while Tasmania's Pumphouse Point claimed Regional Hotel of the Year.

The effortlessly luxe Crown Towers Melbourne was named Large Hotel of the Year, but the biggest winner of the night was The Langham Sydney, winning the trifecta: Best Club Sandwich, New Hotel of the Year and the most coveted of all, Hotel of the Year.

"We're so humbled and delighted," said The Langham Sydney's general manager, Sonia Lefevre. "It's very exciting and I can't wait to take these trophies to back of house with my staff to celebrate."

The evening's menu went from smoked ocean trout escabeche with rocket, lemon pearl and pumpernickel crumb, to braised beef short rib with parsnip purée, Brussels sprouts and bone marrow, and finished with Campari-spiked Nespresso shots at the dessert buffet as celebrations headed into the night. ●



**PRIDE OF PLACES**  
Clockwise, from far left:  
Nespresso Oceania's market director Loïc Réthoré with Bauer Media publisher Cornelia Schulz; G7 editor Anthea Lucas; smoked ocean trout escabeche; Sonia Lefevre; desserts on the buffet; Margie Burridge (left) and Amy Currant; Rowena Fitzgerald (left) and Tracy Atherton; Michael Gray; Nespresso Negronis; Langham chef Thomas Heinrich.





HIP MUSEUM

THE WHITNEY  
MUSEUM OF  
AMERICAN ART

## The Manhattan project

*The Whitney Museum's new annex adds to the district's reincarnation.* As if you needed another reason to visit New York, the Whitney Museum of American Art has opened its new Renzo Piano-designed building, in Manhattan's Meatpacking District. "We're so thrilled with what Renzo has created," says the Whitney's director, Adam Weinberg, of the architect who also designed the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, and Berlin's Potsdamer Platz.

However, the eight floors of art, educational facilities and workshop spaces (all with the chameleon-like ability to change function and form with the flick of a switch) are more than just a gallery; together they form an important jigsaw piece in the district's reincarnation.

From carcass wholesaler to luxury hotspot, the Meatpacking District is now home to boutiques, food markets and, of course, the elevated train track-cum-inner-city garden, the High Line.

"The High Line is such a clever invention and the fact that the Whitney is now the terminal of it is proof of this wonderful urban vision," says Luigi Maramotti, chairman of Italian brand Max Mara, whose art-collecting family were awarded a Whitney Museum American Art Award in 2014 for sustained commitment to the arts. "Our connection to the Whitney goes way back; we have always loaned paintings from the Collezione Maramotti to the Whitney biennial."

To mark the occasion, Max Mara has designed the Whitney bag in conjunction with the Renzo Piano Building Workshop: a sold-out limited-edition tote reminiscent of the building itself. "The Whitney bag embodies Max Mara values: fashion, design, craftsmanship and quality," says Maria Giulia Prezioso Maramotti, the brand's US retail director. "America Is Hard to See" is showing at the Whitney until 27 September. [whitney.org](http://whitney.org) JAMIE HUCKBODY

**MISSION: MONACO** Alain Ducasse doesn't rest on his laurels. He has refashioned and renamed his Monte-Carlo restaurant, Le Louis XV, as Alain Ducasse à l'Hôtel de Paris, in line with an overall renovation of the hotel. Protégé Dominique Lory heads the kitchen. [alain-ducasse.com](http://alain-ducasse.com)

## SUN STRIKE

Off to the beach this month? Estée Lauder's Bronze Goddess range – including this limited-edition Shimmering Body Oil Spray, \$80 for 50ml – will give your skin a radiant glow whether you're in Capri or Cephalonia. [esteelauder.com.au](http://esteelauder.com.au)



## Blackman tribute

The legacy of Australian artist Charles Blackman will be celebrated in Blackman + Bromley, a unique collaboration between the Blackman family (ARIA-award-winning Bertie Blackman and architect and graphic designer Felix Blackman) with artist David Bromley and his wife, Yuge. Blackman + Bromley will see works from the famous painter exhibited alongside new contemporary interpretations at two Daylesford locations. *The exhibition is on now; blackmanstudio.com.au, bromleyandco.com* MAGGIE SCARDIFIELD



#### KATIE NOONAN

*Musician*

"The first time I saw Rome and Florence, I was freshly a mum. So my beautiful Dexter, who is now 10, was about four months old. In retrospect, it was a



read about, heard about and seen pictures of.

"From there, we went to Florence and we loved it. It's such a beautiful city. We were lucky enough to be there on the market day. We bought this incredible food straight from the farmers that had lines etched with soil, and we bought this incredible wine from a winemaker. Strangely enough, we

"Rome's got this huge, very-significant-city kind of thing. Florence felt more like a sleepy artist's town.

"I love Italians. The way they dress, they're so flamboyant and fantastic.

"Everyone was very friendly. You'll have men trying to crack on to you while you're standing holding a baby, with your wedding ring on, next to

### Nothing prepares you for Italy. The beauty and majesty of the architecture – it's mind-blowing.

pretty crazy time to travel, but that's what I did.

"I think nothing prepares you for Italy. The beauty and majesty of the architecture – it's mind-blowing. I remember coming out of the train station in Rome and seeing the Colosseum and not quite believing what I was seeing – this building I'd

were in New York a week later and the same bottle of wine was at a restaurant for \$200 and we'd bought it for 15 euro.

"Florence is crazy. It's a phenomenally beautiful place. But you can see why Rome ruled the world – the dedication, attention to detail, mastery of engineering and architecture.

your husband. I found it very funny.

"I love how full of life Italians are. They live to be with friends and family and to eat and drink well and enjoy the blessings of life. They've got a lot of stuff right in Italy. I'd love to go back." *Katie Noonan's new album, Transmutant, hits the shelves on 24 July.*

## HOT PROPERTY

### Bouddi treatment

*Make an escape to rejuvenated seaside retreat.*

Yep, that's a John Olsen and a Sidney Nolan. But getting up close to fine Australian art is only a fraction of the fun at Pretty Beach House.

The luxury retreat, above Pretty Beach on the Bouddi Peninsula – about 90 minutes north of Sydney by car – has reopened after a nip-and-tuck by proprietors Brian and Karina Barry (of Bells at Killcare). The estate sleeps eight in four pavilions set among Angophora gums. Features include private plunge pools, espadrilles in place of slippers and bars with Riedel glassware for the complimentary bottles of Glenlivet, Belvedere and Bombay Sapphire.

The décor, rich in sandstone, reclaimed timber and copper, takes its cues from the surrounds. It shines in the communal open-kitchen and bar area where private chefs turn out all-day eats designed by Balla chef Stefano Manfredi. A help-yourself cellar offers more than 50 wines, plus 50 top-shelf drops upon request. [prettybeachhouse.com](http://prettybeachhouse.com) MAYA KERTHYASA



### VANITY CASE CLEANSING BALMS

*Our round-up of the best leak-proof cleansers to keep up your skin routine when you're on the move.*

**1** Napoleon Perdis Balm Voyage Moisture Complex Cleanser and Makeup Remover, \$59. [napoleonperdis.com](http://napoleonperdis.com)

**2** Clinique Take the Day Off Cleansing Balm, \$55. [clinique.com.au](http://clinique.com.au)

**3** Ole Henriksen Pure Truth Melting Cleanser, \$46. (02) 9221 5703

**4** Omorovicza Thermal Cleansing Balm, \$92. [mecca.com.au](http://mecca.com.au)

**5** Dr Jart+ Ceramidin Oil Balm, \$49. (02) 9221 5703





BY CLIVE DORMAN



Phong says the airline had reviewed the premium economy idea "many times every year" before deciding on a 2015 launch. "We have determined that it is now the right time to do so, with the market adequately educated in that product," Goh said recently.

Vice-president of commercial Mak Swee Wah says there's a clear market segment that wants an option between business and economy. "Certainly we will hope that through optimal pricing we will be yield accretive," Mak says.

premium economy will be mainly popular with economy flyers who won't part with big money to sit right up the front.

Mak says the airline wants to tap into "aspirational" economy travellers seeking more comfort and a wider choice of in-flight offerings. He says the airline is also hoping to lure back business passengers who wanted something more than economy but wouldn't pay for business class.

Far from being a passive follower of the

Airways' Boeing 777s currently have premium economy on this route.

For Qantas flyers on Sydney-Singapore, there's nothing between around \$880 return for a discount economy seat and around \$3500 in business class, according to booking engines Boarding Pass checked with in May for early September travel.

From August, Singapore Airlines will be able to offer an economy discount fare of around \$850 return, premium economy at around \$2200

Singapore Airlines service, ScootBiz, the budget business class on the airline's low-cost subsidiary, Scoot, is about half the price: around \$1000 return between Sydney and Singapore, with a seat that has virtually identical specifications and comes from the same factory as the new Singapore premium economy seat.

And at the bottom of the market, Scoot will do a return economy discount for around \$450.

(Qantas's Jetstar has similar fares on the

## The airline wants to tap into "aspirational" economy travellers seeking more comfort and a wider choice of in-flight offerings.

**S**ingapore Airlines launches its new premium economy class in August, targeting leisure travellers who want to trade up, rather than business travellers who are looking to trade down.

The airline is one of the last major carriers to add premium economy and says it's launching the service now because of the widening gap between business and economy fares and the growing "segmentation" of air travel.

Singapore Airlines chief executive Goh Choon

In other words, they're banking on economy travellers who are willing to trade up from the cheaper seats at the back of the plane.

This is a crucial point for all airlines that have adopted premium economy services because there's always been a fear of losing business-class fares if corporate flyers choose to trade down and seek relief from growing business fares.

But, with business class priced well above discount economy rates, Singapore Airlines believes

market-segmentation trend, the Singapore Airlines group is becoming a leader and that's shaking up the competition – on the Singapore-Sydney route, at least. Qantas has decided to restrict of premium economy to its long-haul A380s and Boeing 747s so their Sydney-Tokyo and Sydney-Hong Kong services are the only Asian routes that have the in-between class. Qantas's A330s, which operate Sydney-Singapore daily, are configured with business and economy classes only. Only British

return and business class at around \$4500.

One of the marketing pitches Singapore Airlines will use to differentiate it from competitors' premium economy is the Book the Cook program, which became well known in the airline's first and business-class cabins.

Book the Cook lets passengers choose in-flight meals before the flight with what the airline says is a wider range of dishes – and superior quality – to what would be offered onboard.

However, if you just want the seat without the

Melbourne-Singapore route, but does not operate on the Sydney-Singapore route.)

However, like Qantas, Singapore Airlines is restricting premium economy to its biggest jets only, the A380 and Boeing 777-300ER and 20 of its A350 fleet.

That means many international routes served by A330s, which make up nearly a third of Singapore Airlines' fleet, will miss out, including Perth-Singapore, Adelaide-Singapore and some services from Brisbane to Singapore. ●



### DREAM RUN

The long haul to South America is more attractive with LAN's new Boeing 787 Dreamliners on the daily Sydney-Santiago route. The cabin aesthetics include sleekly moulded interiors mood-lit to help flyers adjust to time zones, and

larger windows polarised to reduce glare. Entertainment includes classics, blockbusters, box-set TV series and, in business class, 39cm personal screens. The invisible innovations offer the greatest benefits – passengers breathe a fifth less carbon dioxide and enjoy 40 per cent less noise. [lan.com](http://lan.com)

### ESCAPE IN STYLE

Qantas has launched twice-weekly flights to Hamilton Island, putting top resorts Qualia and One & Only



SANTIAGO

Hayman Island within easier reach and allow well-heeled winter refugees to fly there in business class style on the carrier's new Boeing 737-800. [qantas.com](http://qantas.com)

### SQUEEZY JET

EasyJet is putting on the squeeze. CEO Carolyn McCall said it would shoehorn another six seats onto its new A320s, taking the passenger tally from 180 to 186. The aircraft come into service in May 2016. [easyjet.com](http://easyjet.com) KENDALL HILL

## IN THE BAG

### CARD KEEPERS

Keep your essential cards together in a slim stylish case – at your fingertips when you need them.

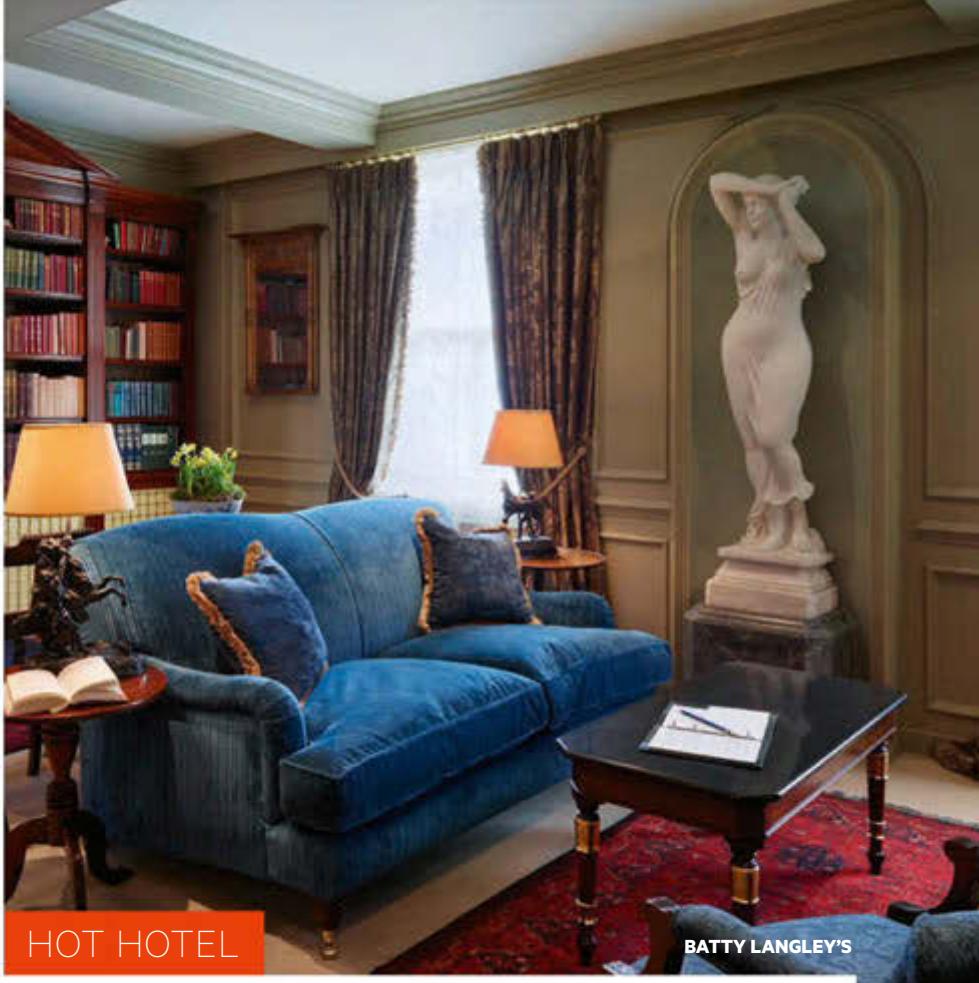
1 Emilio Pucci PVC credit card holder, \$174.30.  
[davidjones.com.au](http://davidjones.com.au)

2 Tiffany & Co textured-leather card case, \$230.  
[tiffany.com.au](http://tiffany.com.au)

3 Louis Vuitton Epi-leather card holder, \$385.  
[louisvuitton.com](http://louisvuitton.com)

4 Valextra textured-leather card holder, \$216.10.  
[net-a-porter.com](http://net-a-porter.com)

5 Diane Von Furstenberg leather card holder, \$70.  
[matchesfashion.com](http://matchesfashion.com)



HOT HOTEL

BATTY LANGLEY'S

## Batty for Batty Langley's

New London hotel from the Hazlitt's

creators replicates Georgian grandeur.

For much of the past two centuries Spitalfields, in east London, was a slum. Now fashionable, its fortunes changed in the 1990s when it started getting gentrified, and the neighbourhood has become one of the most charming historic areas of London.

It's teeming with clothing stalls, antiques markets and notable restaurants such as Taberna do Mercado, the latest opening from Nuno Mendes of Chiltern Firehouse fame.

Back in the 18th century, comparatively wealthy Huguenot artisans built the loveliest parts of Spitalfields. The well-restored Folgate Street is now home to a museum showcasing one such Huguenot building, and next door is the area's first luxury hotel, Batty Langley's.

Hoteliers Douglas Blain and Peter McKay are preservationists and self-confessed eccentrics who previously created the atmospheric Hazlitt's Hotel in Soho from a shell, followed by The Rookery in Clerkenwell.

The Batty Langley's project started 20 years ago with the acquisition and eventual rebuild of a five-storey building. Over the past five years McKay has sourced furniture and artwork to evoke a plush 18th-century inn. The rooms have remarkable attention to detail in everything from the plumbing (dolphin bath spigots, elaborate flush levers) to tongue-and-groove panelling that replicates the grandeur of the Georgian era. It feels like a members' club than a hotel. There's no restaurant and the front door is locked to all but guests. The service is welcoming, though. Breakfasts are served in the rooms, and some suites have views across the East End. 12 Folgate St, London, E1 6BX, [battylangleys.com](http://battylangleys.com) GUY DIMOND



**APRÈS-SKI SPA** Fancy a side of spa with that ski? QT Falls Creek hits the spot with a pressure-point-targeting thermal massage, perfect after a day on the slopes, or polish parched winter skin with the Ginger Bliss Kiss, a Turkish salt scrub, followed by exfoliation, and a ginger oil and hot-stone massage. [qtfallscreek.com.au](http://qtfallscreek.com.au)



## Keller joins cruise line

Seabourn Cruise Line has appointed US chef and restaurateur Thomas Keller to oversee culinary operations on Seabourn's *Odyssey*, *Sojourn* and *Quest*. Keller, who is known for his restaurants Per Se, The French Laundry and Bouchon, will devise menus for multiple dining venues across the Seabourn liners. Keller's cuisine will start rolling out this year, and early next year, he'll open a signature restaurant on *Seabourn Quest*, before expanding to Seabourn's *Encore* in 2016 and *Ovation* in 2018. [seabourn.com](http://seabourn.com)

## Cargo lounge

Aranui Cruises is upping the ante on cargo cruising

with its latest vessel, Aranui 5. Renderings so far reveal a 125-metre-long freighter, with more than half the ship equipped with private balconies.

Launching in 2016 with a program that includes five voyages in Tahiti, Aranui 5 will hold 260 passengers and have the company's first single-traveller state rooms. The freighter will cruise in French Polynesia and the South Pacific. [aranuicruises.com.au](http://aranuicruises.com.au)

## Scenic route

Scenic Tours has opened reservations for journeys on its latest luxury river cruise vessel, *Scenic Aura*, which will launch on the Irrawaddy River in September 2016. *Aura* will be the second ship in its fleet to be launched in South East Asia. She will carry 44 guests across 22 all-balcony suites, between Mandalay and Pyay over 10 nights. As for the best bed? The 70-square-metre Royal



Panorama suite will be hard to beat; the suite features its own private deck, daybeds and jacuzzi. [scenictours.com](http://scenictours.com)

## The life aquatic

October sees the launch of Aqua Expeditions' third luxury vessel, *Aqua Mekong*. At 62.4 metres long it boasts floor-to-ceiling windows in all 20 suites. David Thompson is taking the helm as executive chef and will serve the likes of Mekong River prawns and catfish, with ingredients such as Kampot peppers sourced from markets in Saigon, Siem Reap and Phnom Penh. [aquaexpeditions.com](http://aquaexpeditions.com)

MAGGIE SCARDIFIELD



## LIGHT READING

In the market for an e-reader? Consider the Kobo Glo HD, which offers a high-resolution experience at an affordable price (\$179.99). It's light, has customisable font options, and can store thousands of books. Sign us up. [kobo.com](http://kobo.com)

## Lounge act

Qantas has enhanced the Aurora Spa experiences in its first-class lounges with a new bespoke range of products. The new offerings complement proper massages and facials (not quickie neck rubs), with candles, ambient sound and fragrances conducive to catatonic swoon. If you're departing from Melbourne or Sydney and can make it to the lounge as little as 20 minutes before boarding, a darkened room and expert hands beckon. And you don't need to know your bergamot from your enzymatic wattleseed to appreciate star treatments such as the Signature Melbourne foot massage (with hands, scalp and neck in the mix) or a Signature Sydney back treatment (exfoliation followed by a cleansing clay masque and body rub). Available in Qantas's Sydney and Melbourne first lounges; book ahead to avoid disappointment. JENNIFER BYRNE



**July**  
IS A GREAT  
MONTH TO...

**The Melbourne City Cellar Door and Wine Market**  
program continues on the first Saturday of each month at Cumulus Up. On 4 July, top drops from the Beechworth region are on show, and alongside the Domenicas, Giacondas and Sentios on pour, a pork spit-roast will keep the swillers well fed. The Perth Institute of Contemporary Arts' annual **PICA Salon**

opens on 5 July and sees 19 local, national and international artists exhibit.

**The Scandinavian Film Festival** takes over Palace cinemas across Australia from 8 to 29 July; look out for Australian actor Jonathan LaPaglia in the Norwegian suspense thriller *Pioneer*. **Bastille Day** celebrations kick off early at Brisbane's French Festival (10 July). On 18 July, New Zealand producer **Dry River Wines** hosts a dinner at The Farm at Cape Kidnappers in celebration of 30 years. On the same night in Sydney, Pei Modern raises a glass (or two) of sparkling Shiraz at their six-course Christmas in July banquet.



**BAGS OF STYLE** The classic Longchamp tote takes a modern-art turn with the Memphis tote (\$259). This graphic print is inspired by the Memphis Group design movement of Milan in the 1980s. 1800 083 355



From left: Coconut clusters, a photo of Yellow Bourbon coffee cherries in Carmo de Minas, Brazil, and Salted-Caramel Affogato with **Dulsão do Brasil** served in a Nespresso Glass Cappuccino cup.

The **NESPRESSO**  
**ORIGINS**  
**SERIES** 

## Hot shots from Brazil

Discover the smooth and sweet profile of a pure Brazilian Nespresso Grand Cru.

Nespresso coffee experts constantly travel to the world's top coffee-growing regions to source the perfect beans for each of the 23 Grands Crus in the range. Nespresso offers four permanent Pure Origin Grands Crus: coffees sourced exclusively from a single origin to showcase the characteristics of that country. One of those Pure Origin coffees is **Dulsão do Brasil**.

Brazil is renowned for the quality and quantity of its coffee. It's the largest coffee producer in the world, yielding around 25 per cent of the world's coffee supply. Nespresso has developed long-term relationships with more than 63,000 farms as part of the AAA Sustainable Quality Program. This allows coffee experts to select individual crops according to the quality and aroma profiles year on year. It also helps to protect the future of coffee farming in Brazil by implementing sustainable practices.

Brazil was the first country to supply coffee to Nespresso as certified by the AAA Sustainable Quality Program in 2005. Since then, the coffee quality continues to be consistently exceptional, and Brazilian beans go into 17 of the 23 Nespresso Grands Crus available today.



### Salted-caramel affogato with **Dulsão do Brasil**

Makes 1

- 1 scoop salted-caramel ice-cream
- 1 capsule **Dulsão do Brasil**
- 1 tsp slivered almonds

- 1 Place the salted-caramel ice cream in a Nespresso Glass Cappuccino cup.
- 2 Extract the capsule of **Dulsão do Brasil** over the ice-cream as a 40ml espresso.
- 3 Scatter slivered almonds over the top to finish.

With all the *smoothness and sweetness* that coffee lovers expect from Brazil,

**Dulsão do Brasil** truly represents this country's exceptional coffee quality.

Mitch Monaghan, Coffee Ambassador  
– Nespresso Australia and New Zealand

**NESPRESSO**

For more information, visit  
[nespresso.com](http://nespresso.com)

# Gourmet shopping

They're the flavours of the month, so put these items at the top of your wish list.



**Weylandts** For a dazzling collection of bright ideas for your home, look to Weylandts. Featured here are the Silver Antiqued adjustable floor lamp, \$795, and the Angle Arm adjustable desk lamp, \$395. [weylandts.com.au](http://weylandts.com.au)



**Flight Centre** Experience luxury and adventure on a three-night escape to Auckland. Stay in the five-star Sofitel, enjoy an Oyster Inn fly-and-dine excursion before landing for lunch and bubbles on Waiheke Island. [flightcentre.com.au](http://flightcentre.com.au)



**Frédérique Constant** This new addition to the iconic ladies automatic Heart Beat collection features a 35mm rose gold-plated case, diamond-set bezel, mother of pearl and diamond-set dial, and alligator leather strap. [frederiqueconstant.com](http://frederiqueconstant.com)



**Canturi** Eternal by Stefano Canturi is a collection of bracelets with enduring appeal. Crafted in pink, yellow and white gold with diamonds, the range has been created to capture life's most memorable moments. [canturi.com](http://canturi.com)



**APT Captain's Choice** You are invited to go beyond the ordinary and join Captain's Choice on a delectable culinary touring experience in Europe in 2016. Brochure out now. Call 1800 650 738 or visit [captainschoice.com.au](http://captainschoice.com.au).



**APT Touring** Discover beauty and history in the south of France and enjoy a feast for the senses. Stunning landscapes, historic towns and culinary delights await. Call 1800 335 714 or visit [aptouring.com.au](http://aptouring.com.au).



**Levantine Hill** Samantha's Paddock Mélange Traditionnel 2012 is handcrafted without compromise. James Halliday awarded this, the first vintage, 96 points noting its immaculate balance and elegance. [levantinehill.com.au](http://levantinehill.com.au)



**Lindblad Expeditions** See the old world in a new light. With 11 new European itineraries aboard *National Geographic Orion* in 2016, you'll journey off the beaten path for an extraordinary experience. [au.expeditions.com/destinations/europe-orion](http://au.expeditions.com/destinations/europe-orion)



**Harvey Norman** The Tefal Cuisine Companion Kitchen Machine is an all-in-one food preparation machine that makes light work of cooking by replacing up to 10 different kitchen appliances. [harveynorman.com.au](http://harveynorman.com.au)



# Top form in Tuscany

Siena, famed for the Palio horse race which runs this month, is a medieval gem and a sure-fire winner in the arts and culinary stakes, writes **John Irving**.

## STAY

### Hotel Certosa di Maggiano

Just a kilometre from the *centro storico*, this refined four-star hotel is set on parkland in a restored 14th-century Carthusian monastery. Its 17 rooms and suites are all converted monks' cells and its stylish restaurant, Il Canto, is one of Italy's finest. A heated pool, tennis court, spa and a jogging track are among the many amenities available. Rooms from \$522 per night. *Hotel Certosa di Maggiano, Strada di Certosa 82, +39 577 288 180, certosadimaggiano.com*



the genuine articles are something else. *Palazzo Pubblico, Piazza del Campo 1, +39 577 292 111*

## SHOP

Lined in Renaissance times with banks, patrician palazzi and guild workshops, **Via Banchi di Sotto** and **Via Banchi di Sopra**, now locals and tourists flock there to shop for everything from food to fashion. At **Morbidì** (*Via Banchi di Sopra 75, morbidi.com*) you'll find Tuscan charcuterie and cheese, while **Liberty** (*Via Banchi di Sopra 28*) offers designer clothes and shoes.

For the best panforte and cantucci in town, head to **Bar Nannini Conca d'Oro** pâtisserie (*grupponannini.it*), run by the Nannini family, famous thanks to the exploits of whizz-kid scions rock star Gianna and her brother, ex-Formula One racing driver Alessandro. *Bar Nannini Conca d'Oro, Via Banchi di Sopra 24*

## DRINK

Housed in the 15th-century palace of the same name, a stone's throw from Piazza del Campo, **Enoteca Palazzo Piccolomini** (*Via del Paradiso 56,*

*enoteca piccolomini.it*) stocks a staggering assortment of wines and spirits, while close by, **Enoteca I Terzi** (*Via dei Termini 7, enotecaterzi.it*) has about 1800 labels in its 13th-century cellar, a number of which are always available by the glass and for group tastings. The popular **Compagnia dei Vinattieri** (*Via delle Terme 79, vinattieri.net*), in a basement opposite the house where Saint Catherine, the city's patron saint, was born, is the place to go for apéritifs of an evening.

PHOTOGRAPHY ALAMY

## INSIDER TIPS

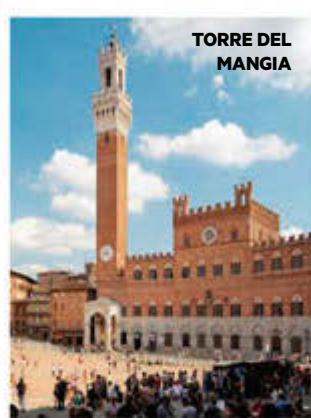
### DON'T MISS

The Palio, held twice a year on 2 July and 16 August, is an inebriating experience. But so is the lead-up, when competing neighbourhoods become scenes of drum-rolling parades and riotous banqueting.

### DAYTRIPPING

The walled towns of Monteriggioni and San Gimignano with its 16 medieval towers, the wine hills of Montalcino, the "ideal" city of Pienza and Etruscan Volterra are all an hour or less by car from Siena. Take your pick. ●

**GETTING THERE** Singapore Airlines has multiple flights from Australia to Singapore, with three connections to Rome a week. Local carriers offer connections between Rome and Siena. [singaporeair.com](http://singaporeair.com)



TORRE DEL MANGIA



**1** Chanel Le Vernis Nail Colour in Rouge Noir, \$39. **2** Isabel Marant embroidered suede vest, \$3,320, from Net-a-Porter.

**3** Louis Vuitton Eole 50 travel bag, \$2890.

**4** Handmade copper flask, \$420, from Kaufmann Mercantile. **5** Marc By Marc Jacobs cotton-silk scarf, \$213, from Farfetch.

**6** Barantani leather drawstring bucket bag, \$815, from Hunt Leather.

**7** Tom Ford Oud Wood eau de parfum, \$295 for 50ml, from David Jones. **8** Saint Laurent embellished rabbit-felt fedora, \$2272, from Net-a-Porter.

**9** Salvatore Piccolo wool shirt, \$356, from Farfetch.

**10** Alpen Italian leather manicure kit, \$140, from Kaufmann Mercantile.

**11** Rag & Bone suede moccasins, \$502, from Shopbop. **12** Country Road jeans, \$129. Stockists p183. ●

# Cabin fever

Headed for the great outdoors? Pack to meet the elements in style with an earthy palette and cosy, rugged textures.



# HOME & FOOD *design* WEEKEND

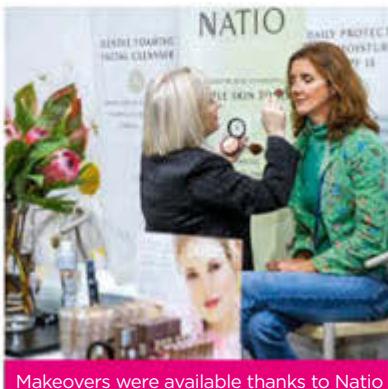
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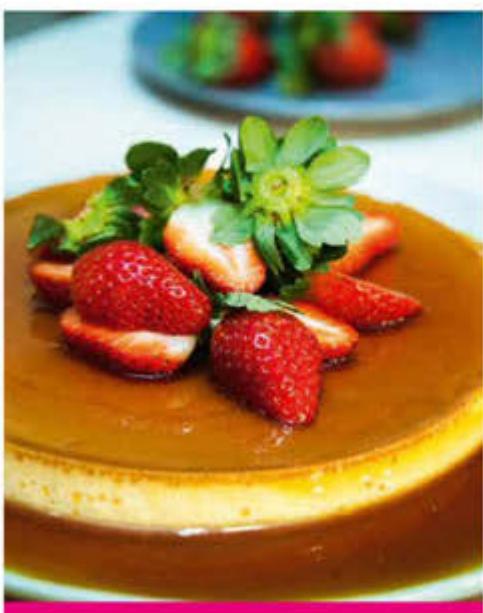
Makeovers were available thanks to Natio and *The Australian Women's Weekly*.



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Salmon was the star attraction from Tassal and *The Australian Women's Weekly*.



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FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE EVENT, VISIT [HOMEFOODDESIGNWEEKEND.COM.AU](http://HOMEFOODDESIGNWEEKEND.COM.AU)

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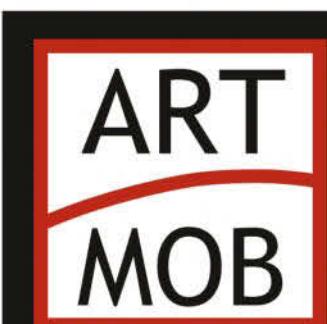
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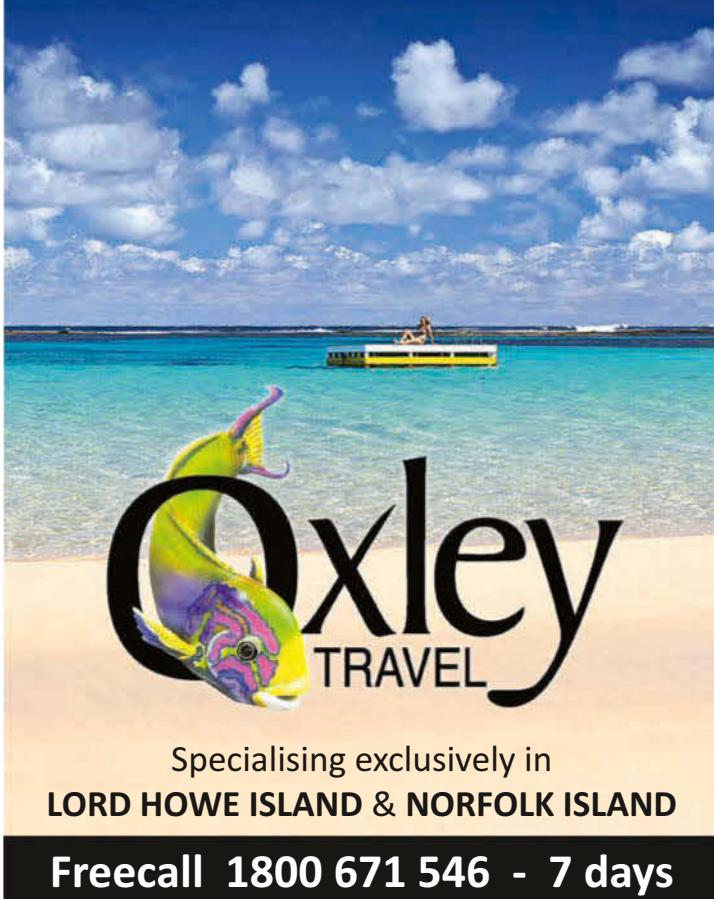
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## CAPTION FROM P79

“Verona” tiles by Greg Natale for Teranova, \$120 per square metre, from Teranova. Domsjö single-bowl sink, \$249, from Ikea. Ringskär single-lever tap, \$79, from IKEA. Norm wire bowl (in sink), \$85, from Top3 by Design. Bondi Wash hand soap, \$33 for 500ml, from Shop U. Ceramic hanging garden, \$95, and succulent, \$20, from Terrace. Gold-leaf tray, \$59, from Shop U. Copper chemist bottle and flask set (carrier only; flasks not shown), \$105, from Zaffero. Storage jar, \$38, from Shelf Life. Iittala Kartio tumblers, \$30.95 for two, Menu salt and pepper mill (only one shown in pink), \$129.95 for set of two, and Menu Norm Mini Bottle, \$47.95, all from Design Mode International. Tutto towel in Rosa Melange, \$32, from Hale Mercantile Co. Marie-Hélène Clauzon “Black Tie” plates (black and white, bottom in stack), \$65 each, from Koskela. Marie-Hélène Clauzon side plate (middle in stack), \$45, and condiment bowl (top of stack), \$35, from MH Ceramics. Nolan Graphite 24-piece cutlery set, \$199, from Country Road. Electrolux ESTM9804C 700W stick blender, \$219, from Harvey Norman.

## FARE EXCHANGE (p34)

**Innocent Bystander Restaurant & Wine Bar**

336 Maroondah Hwy, Healesville, Vic, (03) 5962 6111, innocentbystander.com.au

**Marque** 4/5 355 Crown St, Surry Hills, NSW, (02) 9332 2225, marquerestaurant.com.au

**Muse** Hungerford Hill Wines, 2450 Broke Rd, Pokolbin, NSW, (02) 4998 6777, musedining.com.au

**Rough Rice**, a pop-up stall by Adam James of Tricycle Café, will be at Dark MOFO 12–22 June; for updates, check out James’s Twitter account: @roughricetas

**1803** 0411 765 662, 1803.com.au  
**Astra Walker** astrawalker.com.au  
**Aura by Tracie Ellis** (03) 9552 6090, aurahome.com.au  
**The Bay Tree** (02) 9328 1101, thebaytree.com.au  
**Becker Minty** (02) 8356 9999, beckerminty.com  
**Bison Australia** (02) 6257 7255, bisonhome.com  
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**Chefs' Warehouse** (02) 9211 4555, chefswarehouse.com.au  
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**Design Mode International** 1800 084 258, designmode.com.au  
**Dinosaur Designs** (02) 9698 3500, dinosaurdesigns.com.au  
**Dolce & Gabbana** dolcegabbana.com  
**Domayne** domayneonline.com.au  
**Douglas and Bec** douglasandbec.co.nz  
**Emily Ziz Style Studio** (02) 9380 4180, emilyziz.com  
**Farfetch** farfetch.com  
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**Have You Met Miss Jones** (02) 8339 0777, haveyoumetmissjones.com.au  
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**SOUPS, STARTERS,  
SNACKS AND SIDES**

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 Barley, mushroom and beef broth SA.....116  
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**MEAT AND POULTRY**

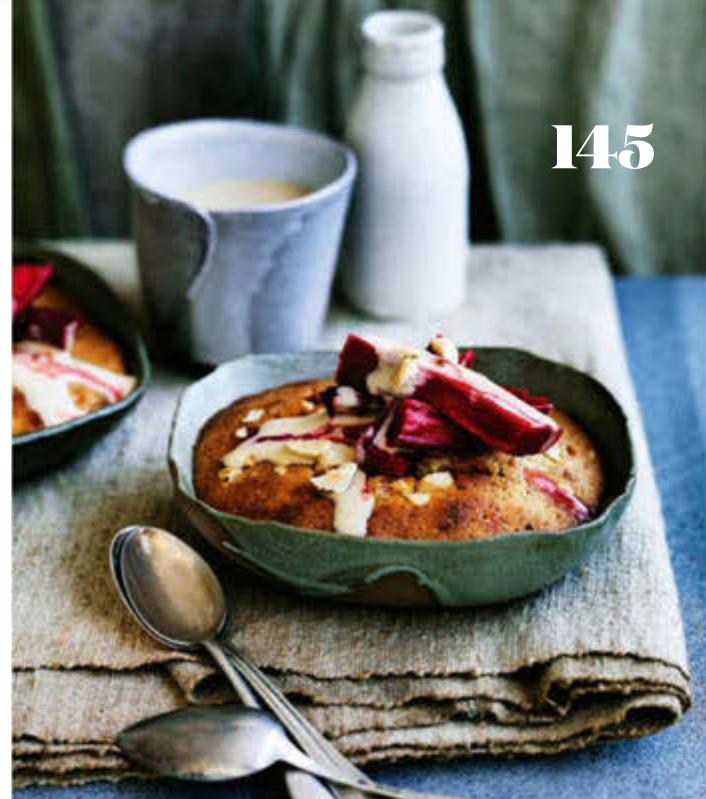
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**COOK'S NOTES****MEASURES & EQUIPMENT**

- \* All cup and spoon measures are level and based on Australian metric measures.
- \* Eggs have an average weight of 59gm unless otherwise specified.
- \* Fruit and vegetables are washed, peeled and medium-sized unless otherwise specified.
- \* Oven temperatures are for conventional ovens and need to be adjusted for fan-forced ovens.
- \* Pans are medium-sized and heavy-based; cake tins are stainless steel, unless otherwise specified.

**COOKING TIPS**

- \* When seasoning food to taste, we use sea salt and freshly ground pepper unless otherwise specified.
- \* To blanch an ingredient, cook it briefly in boiling water, then drain it. To refresh it, plunge it in plenty of iced water (this stops the cooking process), then drain it.
- \* We recommend using free-range eggs, chicken and pork. We use female pork for preference.
- \* To dry-roast spices, cook the spices in a dry pan, stirring continuously over medium-high heat until they're fragrant. The cooking time varies depending on the spices used.

- \* RSPCA Australia's recommendations for killing crustaceans humanely are to first render the animals insensible by placing them in the freezer (under 4C – signs of insensitivity are when the tail or outer mouth parts can be moved without resistance); crustaceans must then be killed quickly by cutting through the centreline of the head and thorax with a knife. For crabs, insert a knife into the head. This splitting and spiking destroys the nerve centres of the animal.
- \* All herbs are fresh, and both leaves and tender stems are used, unless otherwise specified.
- \* Non-reactive bowls are made from glass, ceramic or plastic. Use them in preference to metal bowls when marinating to prevent the acid in marinades reacting with metal and imparting a metallic taste.
- \* Eggwash is lightly beaten egg unless otherwise specified, used for glazing or sealing.
- \* Sugar syrup is made of equal parts caster sugar and water, unless otherwise specified. Bring the mixture to the boil to dissolve the sugar, remove it from the heat and cool it before use.
- \* Acidulated water is a mixture of water and lemon juice; it prevents discolouration.

- \* To sterilise jars and lids, run them through the hot rinse cycle in a dishwasher, or wash them in hot soapy water, rinse well, place on a tray in a cold oven and heat at 120C for 30 minutes.
- \* To blind bake, line a pastry-lined tart tin with baking paper, then fill it with weights (ceramic weights, rice and dried beans work best).
- \* To test whether marmalade, jam or jelly is at setting point, you'll need a chilled saucer (place a couple in the freezer before you start cooking). Remove the pan from the heat, spoon a little mixture onto the saucer and return it to the freezer for 30 seconds, then draw your finger through the mixture – it should leave a trail, indicating that the mixture has reached setting point. If not, cook for another few minutes before testing again. If you prefer, use a sugar thermometer to measure when the mixture reaches 105C; once it does, you can begin testing for setting point.
- \* To clarify butter, cook it over low heat until the fat and the milk solids separate. Strain off the clear butter and discard the milk solids. You will lose about 20 per cent of the volume in milk solids.

**GUIDE TO SYMBOLS**

S SIMPLE G GLUTEN-FREE  
 V VEGETARIAN  
 A CAN BE PREPARED AHEAD

# Gourmet shopping

They're the flavours of the month, so put these items at the top of your wish list.



**Winning Appliances** The revolutionary Asko Pro Series Fusion Volcano wok burner directs heat to the base of the pan, rather than around the sides for fast, even cooking. Available at Winning Appliances from \$2799. [winningappliances.com.au](http://winningappliances.com.au)



**Eurolinx** Ilve's ILCS45X Combination Steam Oven proves that you don't need to be a chef to achieve professional results. Create quality meals with Ilve's Combination Steam Oven as the new star of your kitchen. [ilve.com.au](http://ilve.com.au)



**RSN** Riedel's newest glass has been designed in conjunction with Central Otago winegrowers, to accentuate the region's typical fruit-forward and intense mineral style. Priced \$59.95 for two, it's now available for pre-order online at [riedelglass.com.au](http://riedelglass.com.au).



**Nespresso Perú Secreto** Nespresso's latest exclusive limited edition Pure Origin Grand Cru, Perú Secreto, has an intense, sweet, rounded taste with roasted and cocoa notes. Available at Nespresso boutiques or online at [nespresso.com](http://nespresso.com).



**Domayne** Enjoy the luxury look of marble without the price tag. The Marble Look range of dinnerware is made from porcelain but features an elegant marble finish and includes dinner plates, side plates and bowls. [domayne.com.au](http://domayne.com.au)



**Smeg** The new stand mixer from Smeg features a high-performance 800 watt direct drive and a high torque motor with planetary mixing action, while the variable 10-speed control ensures fast aeration and thorough mixing. [smeg50style.com.au](http://smeg50style.com.au)



**Dyson** Get cosy on cold winter nights with the new Dyson Hot+Cool fan heater. Jet Focus Technology can heat a whole room or just you. It's 75 per cent quieter and features a built-in sleep timer. [dyson.com.au](http://dyson.com.au)



**Tefal** The patented Thermo-Spot is Tefal's renowned innovative heat indicator that lets you know when your pan is preheated and ready for cooking, so you get perfect results every time. [tefal.com.au](http://tefal.com.au)



**HAG Imports** Maxwell & Williams' new Cashmere Bluegrass range, part of the Cashmere collection, is exquisite in its simplicity, with the delicate cobalt design highlighting the luminous qualities of the fine bone china beneath. [hag.com.au](http://hag.com.au)

# Quince essential

*It's a classic combination, quince and Manchego, and makes a cracker note to end a meal on.*

## Cloudy quince jam with Manchego seed crackers

*The psyllium husks in these crackers makes them extra crisp and light. Start this recipe a day ahead to make the quince jam.*

**Prep time 15 mins, cook 3 hours, plus cooling**

**Makes 750gm quince jam and 16 crackers**

- 1.4 kg (about 4 medium) quince, cored and roughly chopped
- 400 gm caster sugar
- 3 thyme sprigs
- Manchego, to serve
- Manchego seed crackers**
- 125 gm (3/4 cup) sunflower seeds
- 20 gm (1/4 cup) psyllium husks (see note)
- 1/4 tsp baking powder
- 45 gm (1/4 cup) white sesame seeds
- 30 gm (2 tbsp) black sesame seeds, plus extra to serve
- 35 gm (1/2 cup) Manchego, finely grated
- 1 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil

- 1 For jam, simmer quince and 2 litres water in a deep saucepan until tender (1½-2 hours). Purée quince, then pass through a sieve into a saucepan and bring to a simmer. Add sugar, stir to dissolve and simmer mixture until it's dark pink, thick and glossy, and jam sticks to a chilled plate when dripped (1-1½ hours). Add thyme and 1 tsp cracked black pepper, pour into a sterilised 800gm jar and store in a cool place. Cloudy quince jam will keep for up to 2 months.
- 2 For crackers, preheat oven to 180C. Finely grind sunflower seeds in a food processor, add psyllium husks, baking powder and 1 tsp sea salt, and process to combine. Add sesame seeds and cheese and, with the motor running, gradually add oil and 1 tbsp water, and process until mixture starts to clump together (1-2 minutes).

Turn out onto a sheet of baking paper, bring dough together, flatten, then place another sheet of baking paper on top and roll out to 2mm square. Remove top sheet and score diagonal criss-cross indentations in pastry with a knife or pizza cutter at 10cm intervals to form 16 even diamond shapes, then, still on baking paper, transfer to a baking tray. Sprinkle with sea salt and black sesame seeds and bake, turning tray halfway through cooking, until golden brown and crisp (15-20 minutes). Cool on tray, then break at indentations and serve with Manchego cheese and cloudy quince jam. Seed crackers will keep stored in an airtight container for up to 2 weeks.

**Note** Psyllium husks are available at most supermarkets and health-food shops.

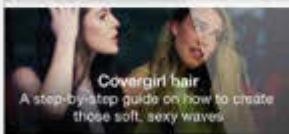
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